# THE ARYAN PATH

VOLUME XXXVIII · NO. 4

April 1967

NAMRATĀ

Our Current in Space

JOAN N. BURNETT

Wisdom's Children

K. E. PARTHASARATHY

The Philosophy of *Nishkama Karma* in the *Bhagavad-Gita*

B. C. LAW

Who Were the Abhiras?

*BOOKS REVIEWED INCLUDE*

*Hindu Culture and Personality: A Psychoanalytic Study*; *Hindu Scriptures*; *Principles of Empirical Realism*; *Towards International Co-operation*; *The Minute Particular*; *Those Mysterious Etruscans*; *Introduction to Bharata's Nāṭyaśāstra*

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Point out the 'Way'
however dimly and lost among the host —
as does the Evening Star
to those who tread their path in darkness.

Editor:
SOPHIA WADIA

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# THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way" — however dimly, and
lost among the host — as does the evening star
to those who tread their path in darkness.

— *The Voice of the Silence*

VOL. XXXVIII APRIL 1967 No. 4

## Our Current in Space

... a good thought is perpetuated as an active, beneficent power, an evil one as a maleficent demon. And so man is peopling his current in space with a world of his own, crowded with the offsprings of his fancies, desires, impulses, and passions; a current which reacts upon any sensitive or nervous organization which comes in contact with it in proportion to its dynamic intensity.

—THE BLESSED MASTER K.H.

We have, each one of us, to make ourselves a centre of light; a picture gallery from which shall be projected on the astral light such scenes, such influences, such thoughts, as may influence many for good ... .

—W. Q. JUDGE

ONE of the most distressing and alarming features of our contemporary civilization is a growing loss of the sense of responsibility, especially among the intellectuals. Often accompanied by brutal callousness, it leads to a total disregard of the plight and the suffering of other people. Many centred in their own selfish pursuits advocate the way of total licence in the name of freedom and stop at little to gratify their own curiosity, often prompted by perversity.

Here and there, however, individuals are awakening to a recognition that we are responsible for the society in which we find ourselves. Occasionally this awakening is caused by intense shock on learning of some horrible crime which reveals the extent to which human minds can become twisted. Not long ago, reporting on a most ghastly series of murders, the British novelist Pamela Hansford Johnson posed a moving and disquieting challenge leading up to the question: "Who 's to blame when a murderer strikes?"

The article is thought-provoking and the author's reflections evince a sound and humane approach to a "moral problem as weighty as Everest," to use her own words. The problem she raises is that of our responsibility

for each other and from it follows the precise question whether we are justified in allowing total licence to art. Concluding her article (*Life*, Asia Edition, for 5 September 1966), she comments upon a London play called *Saved*, in which a baby is tormented and finally killed, and asks:

> What price would we pay to prevent the torturing of one helpless child? The price of restricting art? I don't answer this question. I simply ask it.

The moral problem she has raised echoes the old Biblical question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis, IV.9). If asked to answer it, or even to comment upon it, most of our intellectuals would simply laugh outright and ridicule the very suggestion that we have a share in the sin and the shame of the world and that it is therefore our duty to seek all possible ways and means of bringing relief, of ameliorating social conditions. If we are sincere in our desire to help our fellow men we shall soon find out that the first step lies in taking ourselves in hand and through self-discipline reforming our own natures, for each one of us through his behaviour affects the very atmosphere in which he breathes. Nor is this influence restricted to the effect on the outward plane of objective actions, of mere external deeds. It extends far beyond what we do and embraces what we think and feel; nay, more: what we *are*. Each one, through what he *is*, what he thinks and feels, what he reads, what he sees and hears, is communicating the magnetic quality of his whole being to the air and through the latter to other men and women.

One of the striking statements in the article we have mentioned is the suggestion that not only do bad and unclean books pervert the minds of those who read them, but that through the influence projected through the readers they may also pollute the air. Can it be that some criminals pick up out of the air the germs of crime, the virus of violence and depravity? Miss Johnson writes:

> There are few intellectuals indeed who will lend themselves to serious discussion of whether, by mass communications, we are not poisoning that air — of whether due to its stench some people die; children brutally killed in Hartersley or Indianapolis; or eight nurses slaughtered in Chicago.
>
> [And then she adds:]
>
> What is liberty worth without self-control?

Surely everyone who has retained his humanity will answer that no liberty is worth anything at all if it leads to misuse and abuse! By insisting upon our right to absolute liberty we create a climate of licence which propagates crime and violence. Without self-restraint there cannot be

liberty, but only anarchy and chaos.

But what is this moral pollution of the air? Is it a fact? Indeed it is a sober fact which was well known to the ancients. Old Oriental psychology refers to the unseen tablet of the universe wherein all things are recorded. It affirms that this invisible atmosphere interpenetrates and surrounds our earth. In theology it has been personified as a Recording Angel inscribing the deeds of every human being. Eliphas Lévi called it the Ancient Serpent or the Dragon. H. P. Blavatsky named it the Astral Light, or the Astral Region, "the psychic world of supersensuous perceptions and of deceptive sights, the world of mediums." She warns against passivity, which makes the person more receptive to its influence. This is what she writes:

> [It is] the great terrestrial crucible, in which the vile emanations of the earth (moral and physical) upon which the Astral Light is fed, are all converted into their subtlest essence, and radiated back intensified, thus becoming epidemics — moral, psychic and physical.

The Astral Light is also rightly compared to a picture-gallery wherein the images painted by men through their actions are all exhibited. It has also been described as a photographic plate which retains the impressions it receives and registers them. To the passive and highly impressionable, such as mediums and psychic sensitives, it is their evil genius, so to speak, a veritable demon exercising a hypnotic power. Only a wakeful and positive attitude, coupled with a chaste mind and a pure heart, can protect man from this nefarious influence, all the more dangerous because of its subtle and hidden action.

But let us not overlook the reverse of the medal. While it is all too true that the Astral Light is now foul and vitiated, this is so because of our deeds. Hence it is within our power to improve its quality. And even now we can resist its influence by elevating our thoughts and improving our characters. For we must not overlook that the Astral Light is dual, lower and higher. In its higher aspect it is *Ākāśa,* the storehouse of all that is true and wise and good — "the memory of God." It is possible to become receptive to its divine nature. Each person, like a radio, receives that current of vibrations to which he is tuned by reason of the quality of his own consciousness. This principle, once understood, will lead to many practical applications.

Thus, the individual can make of himself a spiritual centre from which will radiate good and high influences. This will help regenerate his fellow men and constitute a dynamic contribution to the welfare and uplift of humanity; for as the individual purifies and elevates his mind he contrib-

utes to the cleansing of the Astral Light.

> Blessed is he who has acquainted himself with the dual powers at work in the ASTRAL light; thrice blessed he who has learned to discern the *Noëtic* from the *Psychic* action of the "Double-Faced" God in him, and who knows the potency of his own Spirit — or "Soul Dynamics."

May we deserve that triple blessing and thus begin to share, however humbly, in the regeneration of mankind!

NAMRATĀ

---

## The Wheel and the Cross

(Buddha and Jesus)

One saw the Wheel, the other found the Cross
as emblem of our human lot:
Completion in the Wheel, deep suffering in the Cross;
yet for completion many paths of woe,
and through the Cross a hidden joy to know:
To tread the Wheel our minds must subtle be,
to bear the Cross our hearts be stout and free.
With Cross in Wheel a symbol is designed
to pledge our lives to truth and love of humankind.

WILLIAM EWART WALKER

---

JOAN N. BURNETT

# Wisdom's Children

[Readers may remember Mrs. Joan N. Burnett's atricle on "Reflections on a Dark Mystery" in our June 1966 issue. The same quality of quiet reflection on current problems in the light of great spiritual teachings is to be seen in this essay. It is a plea for intellectual modesty in the face of the imponderable powers of the human spirit. Overvaluation of the brain-mind and a reckless interference with the inner and outer nature of human beings are too common in our day. Mrs. Burnett's attitude is a salutary example of the kind of thinking which is needed as a corrective.—ED.]

ALL UNINTENTIONALLY, the mass of daily news and comment (much of it so depressing), poured out on us by our Western press and radio, may be serving a kind of missionary purpose. For as we recoil from it we may be moved to "take refuge," as the Buddha directed, in the recollection of great, unalterable truths, such as cyclic law and Karma, and in renewed study of those ancient teachings which Theosophy conserves and which can secure us against all the false gods and false values of this materialistic age.

Perhaps the chief false god is "intellect," as the West now regards it, and the chief false value that "intellectualism"— the only readily accepted modern creed — which reduces practically all normal human feeling (except, of course, the sexual) to the poor status of heresy.

To enjoy beauty, to find pleasure in quiet, to be swayed by reverence or compassion or even by honest shame, to condemn what is vicious and degrading when the majority like it and when it "sells," to believe that no ends (whatever theorists may say of them) can ever justify evil means, as for example, and very notably, in vivisection and war — all this is "sentimentality," a most contemptible weakness, one which good intellectuals cannot tolerate and which Freud would probably trace to something dubious in our psyche. In brief, to see in reverse, as in the Looking-glass World, to call black white and white black, either from conviction or in admiring imitation, is necessary if we want to keep up with the "intelligentsia" who patronize the Theatre of Horror in London, portray Cinderella's Prince Charming on television as a sex-pervert, and justify indiscriminate bombing on the grounds that "you can't wage war without hurting civilians."

Such misuse of the word is, needless to say, a sad debasing of that noble faculty, the intellect, which is in fact the seat of reason and so of right judgement, the co-ordinating organ of the senses, and the interpreter of the messages they bring home to the inner man. St. Thomas Aquinas

was nearer the truth when he wrote that "Intellect is the faculty which contemplates reality" and saw "an act of the intellect" — "operations of the intellect" — as man's highest achievement, since "the ultimate perfection of the intellect is the divine truth." Yet even so the Angelic Doctor erred, although forgivably; for he did not know the Sanskrit word, *Buddhi,* which only came into currency in the English-speaking world six centuries later, mainly through the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge. Aquinas knew a supreme point of consciousness through which "divine truth," i.e., cosmic reality, becomes apparent; but he could not distinguish between *Buddhi* and *Manas,* the higher and lower minds, thus crediting the latter with what was due to the former when he declared that "the vision of a principle belongs properly to the intellect."

It is the lower mind, not intellect in the sense in which Aquinas used the word, that operates today in the "intelligentsia," among whom so many of our scientists and psychiatrists must be numbered. And if it is to fulfil even its own function properly it needs the guidance of the higher mind, or the "soul's mind," as *The Voice of the Silence* calls it, which would mercifully stop it short in many of its miserable activities — those in technological institutes and research laboratories, for example.

The soul's mind is the spark of the divine in us. It is pure intelligence *per se,* in the sense of being that which, as Plato and Plotinus taught, looks directly upon ideas. But it is also the heart-mind, for it is sensitive and *feeling* — the Upanishadic lotus-centre of our being. It already exists before our physical conception and comes to the new birth full of veiled impressions of past lives. Its potentialities embrace the whole course of our destiny; for it is by virtue of it alone that we are, each one of us, a Witness Self and Eternal Pilgrim.

This is the mind that should consistently rule us in our attitude to earthly existence and to our fellows, the mind that can be helped or hindered according as the intellect — the lower mind — is used rightly or wrongly. This is the mind that now, for the first time in human history, is being directly tampered with by interfering scientists, with the possibility of affecting the whole future evolution of the race.

So to the core of our present study, which was prompted by the reading of two articles which appeared in two of the most reputable of British periodicals, *The Sunday Telegraph* and *The Sunday Times Magazine.* The earlier one dates back more than a year ago. I filed it as merely interesting. The later and much more detailed one, read last November, is startling. Or is my reaction to it merely — "reactionary"?

The poet Shelley, in a fragment of verse, says what all of us would

have held true until now — what *was* true, thank God, of our own infant selves — "The babe is at peace within the womb." That this is no longer so we learn with astonishment; for the babe, or rather the tiny seed-mind divinely implanted in it, can now be conditioned, so these articles tell us, by our officious, triumphant scientists.

Specialists believe, it is complacently stated, that they are now capable of communicating with the unborn child. "It is now possible to guide and monitor its progress until birth, and, some experts believe, even to shape its future life." Even to shape its future life! One is tempted to add, "And may heaven have mercy on its soul!" For who among our modern scientists, experts though they be in grafting borrowed kidneys, hurling mice into outer space, and even (in Russia) producing a two-headed dog, who among them, in the name of reason — to evoke nothing higher — is so God-endowed as to take it upon himself to shape a human life *pre-natally*?

How will they set about it? It seems that there is already in use, in at least one British hospital, "a decompression chamber which, by creating a better blood-flow, supplies a greater amount of oxygen to the (unborn) child than it could receive normally." A doctor who demonstrated the machine in London "is convinced that by using it the foundations of an intelligence can now be laid before birth." An intelligence! Perhaps that of a future fellow-scientist, a bigger bomb-maker perhaps, a speeder-up of motor-cars to greater lethal capacity! "Theosophy rejects," writes H.P.B., "that Science whose methods can only lead to crass materialism." Would not she have included in "crass materialism" this project of laying "the foundations of an intelligence before birth" and have mourned for that science, that lost "noble truth, which certain men have degraded to their own ends and purposes"?

Of course, not every form of research has degraded science — far from it — and no-one would wish to withhold praise for all that has been done in recent years to promote the safety and well-being of mother and child during pregnancy and at birth. But that is not the present issue. By all means give the baby every chance to have the beautifully formed healthy little body to which it is entitled. But leave the *dweller* in the body uninfluenced — unimpeded, one might say — by association with a *Manas* prematurely and unnaturally developed. Leave it in peace to marshal its new faculties and to nurse whatever recollections of former experience linger in its consciousness. "O my soul, remember past strivings, remember!" Such is the prayer of the *Isha Upanishad*.

If all goes well (in their view of it), the sponsors of this scheme hope to do precisely the opposite. Far from thinking peace desirable, the machine is part of the equipment of a new ward established in University

College Hospital, London, entirely to communicate with the unborn child. Communication consists of music being played and lights suddenly flashed on the mother's body. "The baby is surprised into moving its limbs, and the changes in its heart rate and brain waves are recorded in a graph." But either Nature or the baby's self is wise, for we have the satisfaction of reading something else. "Repetitions of these stimuli show that even the unborn child becomes blasé and gradually ignores the intrusions." For "ignores" might we not perhaps read "resents"? But "intrusions" is the right word, certainly.

The fact that the baby does sometimes move its limbs in response to the signals has elicited a wonderfully fatuous remark from the doctor in question. This "adaptation," as he calls it, slight as it is, "implies that the child already has memory in its brain-cells." Here is a discovery indeed! Yet, if confronted with an infant prodigy, a small genius in music, mathematics, or languages, ten to one this same doctor would retract. Would he be likely to acknowledge the unmistakable evidence of a memory stretching far beyond one birth, a memory not dependent upon "intelligence"? Why, it might not be "intelligent" to do so!

That rarely gifted children *are* increasing in number in various parts of the world is a far more interesting and valuable fact than the graph-recording pre-natal machine. We have been told that we might expect them as the Aquarian Age draws near. They are the returning souls who with their gifts and finer, more spiritual, natures are to begin to mitigate to some extent the darkness of Kali Yuga. This is one more reason why the unborn infant should be left to develop naturally, so that no scientist-midwife whose god is "intellect" may divert it from its course. We see in all directions what science ruled only by intellect can bring us to. Intelligence, like patriotism, is not enough. It must be informed from within by spirit.

To redeem our modern Western civilization, to modify its hard, bright, egotistic, self-confident, shallow, materialistic mind, much more is needed than an electrical machine directing its vibrations on an unborn child. Indeed, in so far as it does do what it claims to, namely produce these "decompression babies," who, to mention a few examples from the later article, can manipulate a telephone dial at eleven months, answer a telephone at thirteen months, and at two years of age be seen "plugging valves into sockets and carefully making contact between two (radio) leads so that the indicator dial would swing up, all with uncanny dexterity and strong, focused attention" — in so far as these so-called "wonder children" result from it, it may be an actual hindrance to true progress. For their achievements plainly indicate an abnormal development of

*Manas* and a pitiably early use of it in one direction only — technology. With all this outer activity, how will the soul's mind unfold, how will non-material values ever seem real? Moreover, if some of these children are endowed with gifts from former lives, will not that "strong, focused attention" so early cultivated on the lower level hinder the realization and expression of what is within them?

A passage in *Isis Unveiled* bears directly on this. Would that it could have been given as a footnote to either of these articles!

> In proportion to the sensuous development of the brain and nerves, sooner or later it [the soul] finally loses sight of its divine mission on earth. Like the Vampire ... the brain feeds and lives and grows in strength and power at the expense of the spiritual parent. It becomes powerless to discern the splendour of its higher spirit, to hear the warning voice of its guardian Angel and its 'God'. It aims but at the development and fuller comprehension of natural, earthly life. ... It ignores all that cannot be demonstrated by either its organs of action, or sensations.

That a single warning of H.P.B.'s, a single instance of her heart-wisdom, can bear so closely on one of the most recent of Western scientific experiments shows the urgency, and our duty, of making theosophical teachings far more widely known. We have them condensed for us (much in little) in *The Ocean of Theosophy* by William Q. Judge, and there we find Chapters IV to IX devoted to an analysis of the septenary constitution of man, in the course of which we learn that the fifth principle, *Manas*, or the Thinker, has its own higher and lower aspects — quite apart from the sixth principle, *Buddhi*, or spiritual discernment — and that if the lower prevails over the higher and the Thinker "becomes wholly intellectual, the entire nature begins to tend downward." Moreover, as *Manas* "carries the results and values of all the different lives lived," its evolution depends largely upon which of these are brought uppermost by the influences that it comes under in each incarnation.

Mr. Judge also explains the relationship between the physical and astral bodies, and, when he tells us that the latter is composed of matter which is "electrical and magnetic in its essence," the danger of tampering with what is still in formation becomes ever more apparent. Who can say to what extent the vibrations trained on the unborn child may affect its whole electro-magnetic field? Certainly not the scientists who would deny the astral body's existence. And what would their reassurances be worth in any case? Did not "science" produce the thalidomide babies? Surely, recalling those afflicted little creatures, our laboratory enthusiasts might hang their heads in shame rather than claim boastfully that they can shape a future human life.

It seems as though science will admit to no limitations. Those who worship it are like the builders of the Tower of Babel — continually overreaching themselves, with the prospect of bringing all to confusion in the end. No-one would oppose medical research (provided it was not based on vivisection) if it confined itself to what might be called *legitimate* progress. We rejoice that the number of mothers who die in childbirth today is so small and that so many of the perils of infancy and of the early years of life are now a thing of the past. But the new aim is different. Here is a machine, devised by erring mortal man, part of whose function is to "condition" a soul before its entry into earthly existence. Could any claim be more arrogant? Gone is the humility of those great pioneers in science whose very knowledge made them all the more conscious of how little they really knew. In what modern research-centre or laboratory might we expect to hear Sir Isaac Newton's confession:

> I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.

We have gone a long, long way since then — even further, shall we say, than Hiroshima? Today our scientists are as cocksure as clever schoolboys and as sinister as the Atlantean masters of black magic.

It is too much to hope that their course may be checked in the West (especially now that they have promised us the moon!), and not altogether unrealistic to dread its reaching a point which will see the destruction of life *in toto* as we know it. But India is still comparatively free from them and has her ancient spiritual inheritance to draw upon. We look to India still to give the soul's mind pride of place over the intellect and pray that she may also have the means to build sound bodies to house it. May none of her children come "conditioned" into the Motherland, those children whose sensitive faces and thoughtful or speaking eyes bear her immemorial impress so beautifully. Rather, in this age when *Manas* is both exalted and exploited so mistakenly, may they be living proofs of India's own supreme revelation, that *Brahman* and *Atman* are one!

"It is for the love of the Soul in children that children are dear," says the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. And intellect, far from enriching the soul, will impoverish it, if set on the throne. For "if you think 'I know well,'" says the *Kena Upanishad*, "little in truth you know"; and "not through much learning ... not through the intellect," says the *Katha Upanishad*, can the *Atman* (the soul) fulfil itself and be "Lord of the past

and the future" in every birth.[1]

It is from such teachings, not from man-made machines, that incarnating egos must receive the vibrations. Then intellect, a good servant, might be kept in its proper place, and (recalling some words of Jesus) we might hope to see Wisdom being justified of her children.

JOAN N. BURNETT

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## "Intellect" and "Reason"

MRS. BURNETT writes very gently of the limitations of St. Thomas Aquinas's distinction between true intellect and ordinary reasoning. The following passage, which we quote from the late Professor C. S. Lewis, suggests that St. Thomas's distinction was more searching than might appear from the reference in the article.

> *Intellectus* is that in man which approximates most nearly to angelic *intelligentia*; it is in fact *obumbrata intelligentia*, clouded intelligence, or a shadow of intelligence. Its relation to reason is thus described by Aquinas: "intellect (*intelligere*) is the simple (i.e. indivisible, uncompounded) grasp of intelligible truth, whereas reasoning (*ratiocinari*) is the progression towards an intelligible truth by going from one understood (*intellecto*) point to another. The difference between them is thus like the difference between rest and motion or between possession and acquisition" ($I^a$, LXXIX art. 8). We are enjoying *intellectus* when we "just see" a self-evident truth; we are exercising *ratio* when we proceed step by step to prove a truth which is not self-evident.—C. S. LEWIS: *The Discarded Image* (Cambridge University Press. 1964), p. 157.

Mrs. Burnett is profoundly right in pointing to the value of the term *Buddhi*, introduced by Madame Blavatsky in analysing the faculties of Man. It represents a principle of consciousness which is latent in the ordinary man, but would give "intuition with certainty" to him who could make it active. To activate it is the aim of a great part of true spiritual discipline.

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[1] As translated by J. Mascaro, M.A. (Cantab.), in *Himalayas of the Soul* (The Wisdom of the East Series, John Murray)

K. E. PARTHASARATHY

# The Philosophy of *Nishkama Karma* in the *Bhagavad-Gita*

[Shri K. E. Parthasarathy is a devoted student of religious philosophy, especially in the Hindu tradition. In this essay he examines one of the most important concepts of the *Gītā*: that of *Niṣkāma Karma*, that is, action without involvement in the fruits of action. Shri Parthasarathy writes with constant reference to the *Gītā* text and examines the place of this concept in the whole spiritual discipline taught in the *Gītā*.—ED.]

THE *Bhagavad-Gītā* is not only an authoritative scripture read every day by millions of Hindus but also one of the world's greatest classics. It has broadly divided the path to liberation into four sections: viz., *Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Rāja Yoga,* and *Jñāna Yoga*. "*Yoga*" means the attainment of union with the Supreme by the individual soul.

*Karma Yoga* is the first rung in the ladder and culminates in *Jñāna Yoga*. This not only stands to reason but has been eloquently voiced by Śrī-Kṛṣṇa Himself (*Gītā,* XII.8-11). Although the germs of *Karma Yoga* are contained in the Upaniṣads, in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* Śrī-Kṛṣṇa has indicated it with extreme clearness and beauty. Being the first step in the *Rāja Vidyā* (the "royal" or supreme science), references to it are found scattered all over the scripture.

Action is a necessity of one's nature. There is not a single moment in which one is really inactive (*Gītā,* III.5). Action is not confined to physical or external activity. *Karma* applies to any kind of activity of body or mind, as explained by Śaṅkarācārya in his commentary on the *Gītā*. But Śrī-Kṛṣṇa has elevated *karma* or action to the dignity of *Yoga*. The *karma* taught from this point of view in the *Gītā* is only *Niṣkāma Karma,* i.e., action free from *kāma* and *rāga* (desire and passion).

Though it is impossible for anyone to remain inactive, a life given to incessant activity seems opposed to the mental equipoise and serenity which are necessary for spiritual progress. Hence the urge to cease from all kinds of work so as to live a life of *saṅnyāsa* or renunciation, involving complete cessation from work. The *Gītā* is a synthesis of these ideals and reconciles them in the unity of *Niṣkāma Karma,* which implies activity with a specific attitude. *Niṣkāma Karma* is duty for duty's sake, not out of a desire for, or attachment to, its consequences.

*Niṣkāma Karma* is different from *Kāmya Karma,* i.e., activity for the gratification of desires. Such *karma* includes Vedic sacrifices and rituals by which one secures the right to enter higher worlds of enjoyment after

death. Śrī-Kṛṣṇa impresses on Arjuna: "*Kāmya karma* is far inferior to *Niṣkāma Karma*. Therefore, take thou to the latter, which leads to wisdom. Those who desire for fruit feel miserable" (II.49). The *Nāradaparivrājaka Upaniṣad* says: "Wise men escape death by knowing *Brahman*. There is no other road to salvation." The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* also clearly points out that even Vedic sacrifices are no better than other *karma* in obtaining salvation. Rāmānuja in his commentary on the *Gītā* insists on the performance of *Nitya* (daily) and *Naimittika* (occasional) duties also as *Niṣkāma Karma*.

> In this world there is nothing so purifying as *Jñāna*, but the *Karma-yogin* realizes for himself *Atma-Jñāna*, in course of time (IV.38). ... The *Karma-yogin* attains the release which comes of wisdom by leaving off desire for the fruits of action, while he who, being prompted by desire, is attached to them, becomes bound. (V.12)

The *Kāmya Karma* not only does *not* liberate man, but also binds him more and more; for it creates newer and newer desires. *Niṣkāma Karma* on the other hand kills out desire and passion, and secures freedom from the thraldom of *Māyā* (illusion).

The practice of *Niṣkāma Karma* involves a preliminary disciplined discrimination of the intellect called *vyavasāyātmikā buddhi*. One should distinguish the *Puruṣa* (self) from *Prakṛti* (nature) and realize that all work is done by the activity of *Prakṛti* and that *Puruṣa* is untainted by *karma* and is not attached to it. The self is ever free, not subject to the modifications of matter. It is unborn, eternal, permanent, and ancient, and does not die with the body. At birth the Self puts on a new garment for its use and death is merely the putting off of that garment, when it is worn out or has served its purpose (II.22).

A person of such a disciplined discrimination is beyond the dualism of hope and fear and is free from hatred or desire. A true insight into the nature of the self, coupled with a will to realize it, paves the way for real wisdom and supreme bliss. A man of such insight keeps his wisdom firmly set and becomes fit to practise *Niṣkāma Karma* without let or hindrance. He is able to trace the root of all *karma* and assess it at its proper value. He traces all actions to the interplay of the *guṇas* (the fundamental Qualities of Nature) and the existence of *ahaṅkāra* or egoity in him.

Two important elements are indispensably required in *Niṣkāma Karma*, viz., non-attachment or indifference to the fruits of action and the dedication of work to God. Śrī-Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna: "Do thy duty with thy mind fixed upon the Lord, leaving all attachment and without caring for the fruits of action" (II.48). Both these elements are necessary and great is the virtue of action performed with such an attitude. That which is

done as *Niṣkāma Karma* will never be in vain. There can be no harm caused by it. Even a small portion of the virtue of such *karma* will enable one to overcome much fear (II.40). *Niṣkāma Karma* is thus productive of wonderful results.

Non-attachment brings about freedom from fear and grief. Attachment is the source of fear in man in every sphere of his life and activity. The great Sanskrit poet Bhartṛhari aptly sings: "Everything in the world is fraught with fear. It is non-attachment that makes one fearless." A man who works unattached enjoys peace and happiness untainted by any sin or evil.

The "leaving of fruits to God" has two distinctive advantages: one, securing a dispassionate attitude during the performance of the action and, second, securing peace of mind by saving the mind the trouble of anticipating any particular result or consequence. Being dispassionate, one can do his work carefully and undisturbed. Further, the non-anticipation of a particular fruit or result saves a man the pain of disappointment and enables him to accept any result as from God. As Śrī-Kṛṣṇa says aptly, his "fever" will have gone out of him (III.30).

On account of dispassionateness and detachment, one will not be affected by sense activities and pleasures arising from them. Dispassionateness and vice are mutually antagonistic. Dispassionateness signifies self-control, calmness of mind, equanimity; and vice their loss.

A sudden transition from a stage of desire to that of absolute non-desire is not likely to be possible in the initial stages. Śrī-Kṛṣṇa has suggested the remedy of doing the *karmas* in a new spirit: with the feeling that oneself is not the doer and in the spirit of sacrifice and devotion, doing the action as an act of obedience to the commandments of God and offering it up as an act of worship.

As a result of the dedication of work to God, the *Karma-yogin* approaches nearer and nearer the centre of his being, his inner Self. The God-idea gradually grows upon him until he realizes that he is only an instrument in the hands of God. His mind, freed from the impurity of selfishness and egoism, and unagitated by joys and sorrows, victory and defeat, will reflect truth like a clear, calm lake, and he will realize his true nature as the Self and gain that blessedness which knows no end.

Personal considerations, impulses, and instincts must be relentlessly kept down while performing *Niṣkāma Karma*. This intrusion of even the slightest personal element will sow the seed of a future impulse and a future desire. Śrī-Kṛṣṇa therefore insists on a dedication to Him of even instinctive activities. "Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you

offer, whatever alms you give and whatever austerities you practise — do that as an offering to me" (IX.27).

The acceptability of any *Niṣkāma Karma* solely depends upon its appropriateness to the *svabhāva* (inner disposition) of the individual who seeks to engage himself in it. That is why Śrī-Kṛṣṇa, in insisting upon the practice of *svadharma* (one's own duty), says:

> One should not give up the activities born with one though they may seem faulty (XVIII.48).
>
> It is good to die in carrying out one's *svadharma* but *paradharma* (the duty of another) is fearful (III.35).
>
> *Svadharma,* even if it is imperfectly done, is better than *paradharma,* however well performed. He who does the duty imposed on him by his own nature incurs no sin (XVIII.47).

It is in the nature of all *karma* to destroy *tamas,* laziness or inertia. *Niṣkāma Karma* gradually kills out *rajas* (egoism or violence in activity) also, for non-attachment and worship of God are the best antidotes to pride, selfishness, and egoism. True *sāttvic* humility characterizes such *karma* and it is only this *karma* which can be properly said to involve self-sacrifice. However glorious may be one's work, if it is done with self-consciousness, or pride, or ulterior motives such as gaining fame, etc., there is no sacrifice of self but a propitiation. Such *karma* is only ordinary *karma* and is inferior to *Niṣkāma Karma.*

The *Gītā* also insists on the performance of *Yajña, Dāna,* and *Tapas* (sacrifice, charitable giving, and austerity) as *Niṣkāma Karma.* It extols the *sāttvic* performance of these. *Sāttvic* sacrifice is disinterested duty. *Sāttvic Dāna* is beneficence for the sake of duty and without desire for personal merit. *Sāttvic Tapas* is a process of self-discipline in thought, word, and deed.

No distinctions have been laid down in regard to the nature of activities for *Niṣkāma Karma* and *Kāmya Karma.* But the attitude of the *Karma-yogin* makes an enormous difference in the effect. In the words of Śrī-Kṛṣṇa:

> The same activity which is the cause of bondage becomes the cause of liberation when this attitude is adopted in the performance of that activity (V.12).
>
> He who performs all activities taking refuge in Me attains the imperishable eternal state by My grace (XVIII.56).
>
> Always therefore perform without attachment the activities that have to be done, for he who performs activities free from attachment attains the Supreme (III.19).

Not merely is *Niṣkāma Karma* of spiritual advantage, but, even as work, it will be much better than the work which is done with ulterior motives. That work is the best which is affected least by the personal equation. The greatest works are executed by men who forget themselves in the work. All high work is impersonal and spiritual, being free from considerations of self and the hankering after results. *Niṣkāma Karma* is therefore the best *karma*. It helps very much the individual's progress and at the same time brings about great results.

The theory of *Niṣkāma Karma* throws a flood of light on another important aspect. Each of us has a well-defined and necessary place in the economy of the universe. We are members of it and, when we grow, the world also grows with us. What is really good for us must necessarily be good for the universe. As no single fruit can ripen without the whole tree ripening in proportion, so our advancement means the advancement of the whole universe. Consequently the highest life, viz., the life of *Niṣkāma Karma,* is the highest service to the universe.

The *Gītā* says: "He who beholds inaction in action and action in inaction is wise among mankind" (IV.18). This applies more to sages and liberated souls than to others. "Inaction in action" means doing but with the knowledge that the real Self or the *Ātman* is not the doer. The sage never thinks that he does a thing; for the "he" no longer exists for him. He is one with the *Ātman,* which is eternal and unchangeable. Sages live in the world but as strangers. In the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan, "their existence is on earth, but their citizenship is in heaven." As they are free from selfishness and egotism, it is really God that speaks and acts through them. No wonder, therefore, that Śrī-Kṛṣṇa says: "I regard the sage as myself" (VII.18).

There is some similarity between the *Gītā*'s ethics of *Niṣkāma Karma* and Kant's ethics of duty for duty's sake. Both enjoin the performance of duty for duty's sake, without being actuated by love, hatred, fear, anger, or other emotions. Both are anti-hedonistic and anti-utilitarian. But they also differ in essential points. The *Gītā* regards the attainment of God as the highest good. Kant regards good will or rational will as the highest good. The *Gītā* enjoins the performance of duties ultimately for the good of all creatures. Kant enjoins the performance of duties for the sake of duty. His ethics are legal, while the ethics of the *Gītā* are teleological. Kant stresses the concept of right and duty. The *Gītā* lays emphasis on the concept of God-realization as the highest good.

K. E. PARTHASARATHY

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HARENDRA CHANDRA PAUL

# The Mystic Significance of the *Kīlaka* in the *Candi*

[Readers may remember Professor Harendra Chandra Paul's essay on the Madhu-Kaiṭava myth in our issue of May 1966. In this essay, he examines the suggestive verses which form a kind of warning prologue to the scriptural text known as the *Saptaśatī* or, more popularly, as the *Caṇḍī*. His interpretation of the symbolism is of great interest and very suggestive. He draws not only on Sanskrit but also on Arabic and other mystical traditions.—ED.]

THE *Kīlaka-stava* along with *Argalā-stotra* and *Devī-kavaca,* forms a preface to the most venerated scripture of the Hindus entitled *Saptaśatī* (of seven hundred verses), popularly known as the *Caṇḍī. Kīlaka-stava* is a hymn or eulogium to the *Kīlaka.* In its ordinary sense *kīlaka* means a barrier or impediment, and accordingly, the *Saptaśatī* is a closed chapter to those who are not developed to a certain state of mind fit to read or realize the secret meanings of the sacred scripture. But in its spiritual sense the *Kīlaka* refers to the Great God, Mahādeva, who is the Universal Spiritual Guide of all beings. One cannot enter into the mystic significances of the sacred book if one has not already satisfied one's Spiritual Guide. Or, in its deeper sense, the mystery of the *Caṇḍī* will not be revealed to him who has not understood the secrets of the Universal Spiritual Guide, Mahādeva. For it is the Greatness of the Goddess (*Devī-māhātmya*), of Caṇḍī, the spouse of Mahādeva, that is revealed in the *Saptaśatī.* She is *Mahāmāyā* (lit., the Great Illusion), the *Śakti,* the (expressive) power of the Great God, who is the symbol of the Highest Self (*Parama Puruṣa*) beyond description. As He is beyond any attribute (*Nirguṇa Brahma*), so is He without any form. Yet is she given form, an impediment to Self, by Mahādeva under certain conditions, as is said in the *stava*: *Itthaṃ rūpeṇa Mahādevena kīlitam.*

The conditions under which this *Mahāmāyā* is revealed are thus stated in the *Caṇḍī*:

*Kṛṣṇāyāṃ vā caturdaśyāmaṣṭamyāṃ vā samāhītaḥ*
*Dadāti pratigṛhṇāti nānyathaiṣā prasīdati*

In its literal sense the *stava* may be translated thus:

> All sacrifices and their return gifts are made in an ecstatic or intuitive mood from the eighth to the fourteenth stages of the Moon of the dark fortnight; otherwise, She is not satisfied.

But spiritually the Mind is symbolized by the moon. And when the seventh (out of the fourteen) evil propensity in the mind is totally lost,

the soul is fit to realize the secrets of the Goddess *Caṇḍī*. From the eighth to the fourteenth stage of the mind, the soul can be really absorbed in the mysterious Powers of Her who is nothing but a Great Illusion — and this Illusion is at last revealed to him in the soul's progress, when the mind is totally lost in the realization of Self, which may well be compared with the "Day of the New Moon" (or *Amāvasyā*: from *amā*, together, and *vas*, to dwell). This is the meeting-place of *Jīvātmā* with *Paramātmā*. As the Moon enters the Sun on *Amāvasyā*, so also is the mind of the soul lost in the realization of Self, or rather with his total absorption in the knowledge of Self, often compared to the Sun.

This symbolic picture of the mind compared to the moon (developed to the realization of Self) has well been illustrated in a Bengali *Bāul gān* (or mystic song) which is thus rendered into English:

In what Town doth the Moon dwell on the Day of New Moon?
She is not seen when rising on the first day of New Moon.
The Moon doth rise month after month,
Settling of New Moon and Full Moon—
Is to be through insight known.
When of sixteen digits the Moon,
It is called then the Full Moon;
How doth the Full Moon show its way—
The learned of the world can only say.
When the body-moon is really known—
He is informed of heavenly moon.
Sayeth *Sirāj Sāin*, O thou *Lālan*,
Thou hast lost the Source from pull of flank.
(From Dr. U. N. Bhattacarya's *Bāṅglār Bāul o Bāul Gān*, No. 105)

In its significant sense the *kīlaka* is thus the impediment to a soul in his Journey from the world of rationality to that of spirituality, where only He remains, as is well illustrated by Rabindranath in his *Kheyā* (or Ferry), a book of verse. As the philosopher-poet has made use of his "Ferry" to reach the "Formless Ocean" (*arūp-sāgar*) by crossing over the "Ocean of Forms" (*rūp-sāgar*), so also in the realization of Self everyone is to cross over the three distinct obstacles in his mental self which are respectively the "*argala*" (surge) of the Ocean of Desire (*kāma-sāgara*), the duality in the Self which is a great impediment (*kīlaka*) in the salvation of the soul (*mukti-pāśa*) and the unsteadiness in the reliance on the Self signified by *Devīkavaca*.

Really the soul is ever free; but the mind cannot fully appreciate this till it realizes the Self which is beyond all good and evil or sin and piety. The world-poet Tagore also knows well that the soul is ever free, yet he

cannot surpass the duality of Self in his rational mind, as he sings out in his *mukti-pāśa*:

> I was bound in the house, this time me
> Thou hast bound in the sky tightly.
> Releasing all bonds, in the tie of salvation
> Thou hast bound in secret tightly.

As the *kīlaka* in the *Caṇḍī*, so also *Barzakh* relates to the same significance (in its three aspects) in the *Qurān*. In the *surā* entitled *Furqān* (that discriminates between Truth and falsehood) the Divine Voice cries out: "It is He who has let free the two bodies of flowing water, one palatable and sweet, and the other salt and bitter; yet has He made an *Impediment* (*Barzakh*) between them which is forbidden to be passed" (xxv.53). He is the only Self and there is no entity besides His Self. Only His signs and symbols are everywhere in creation. The Sun and its shadow, day and night, air and water, and all things in nature are His symbols that point to the Divine Law and the Destiny of Man, good or evil. Yet what a wonder that man cannot trust his Own Self! So long as the relative conception of good and evil is in the soul, the man cannot leave aside his discriminating Self. Otherwise, "It is He who makes the night as a robe for you and (your) sleep as a repose (therein) and makes the day a Resurrection." Spiritually, Night, Sleep, and Dawn are every day appearing before us as the three states of life — Death, Repose (*Barzakh*), and Realization (of Self). So also we find in the scriptures that the *Nauroz* or *Nava-varṣa* (New Year's Day) is often considered in its significant sense as the Realization of Self.

To the apparent believer who is not mindful of the Essence of God, appears the *Barzakh* after his physical death. He is conscious of his sorrows and pleasures, but he cannot rationally distinguish between them. But in that discriminating soul, the conflicts of the mind which are the effects of the relative conception of good and evil always haunt him, standing as a *Barzakh* before his progress to the realization of Self, where the two streams meet together. This *furqān* or righteous judgement is always distinguishing between the two streams of water — the two kinds of knowledge, spiritual and rational — as is found in the allegory of the story of Moses in the *Qurān*:

> Behold, Moses said to his attendant, "I will not give up until I reach the junction of two seas or (until) I spend years together in travel." But when they reached the junction, they forgot (about) their Fish, which took its course through the Sea (straight) as in a tunnel (xviii.60-61).

Moses, a symbol for the discriminating soul, is proceeding to meet his

Spiritual Guide, *Khiḍr,* the embodiment of Spiritual Knowledge. But when he meets his mysterious Teacher he forgets all about the secular knowledge symbolized in the figure of the Fish, which merges itself in spiritual Knowledge when the human intelligence is ready for the junction of the two. But mere merger does not itself produce spiritual knowledge. The latter has to be sought out patiently. Hence is the need of a Spiritual Guide. We also find in another *Bāul gān* of the mystics of Bengal a saying in which the spiritual guide himself is compared to *Barzakh*:

*Murshidke barjak dhare—*
*Kāmsāgare jāore ḍaṅkā māri*

(Taking the *murshid* or spiritual guide as your *Barzakh,* laughingly you come across the sea of passion).

*Barzakh* in Arabic means an interval, a partition, a bar; a connecting link; a picture of the imagination, a fancy, or a whim; and one in love with a woman. It is probably connected with the Persian *farsakh,* or rather *farsang,* a *parasang,* a measure of length (like a mile-post); a duration of time, an interval; a chink or cleft; quiet or repose; and one perpetual, that continues for life. The word *farsang* may well be connected with the Sanskrit *prasaṅga* (Greek *parasaqqes*), a connecting link or one that proceeds along. As in the path of a Pilgrim there are mile-posts, so in the pursuit of (spiritual) life there come in different *prasaṅgas.* Through these *prasaṅgas* (or discourses) we shall get our Highest Companionship (*Parama Saṅga*). But if we link ourselves with the different affairs (*prasaṅga*) of the worldly life, we only suffer and meet death at last. But again, these spiritual discourses are a great solace and recreation of the heart in the Pilgrim's progress. In the Journey to the Endless (*ananta*), we are only to go on, while getting "His" knowledge through the limitations of His Self signified as *Prasaṅga.* The continuity of the dual life is ever in process throughout the world, to meet at last the One who is without any second. The One can never be known. He is only to be understood through the progress of companionship (*pra-saṅga*) with the Spiritual Guide. Thus the *Barzakh* or *Prasaṅga* is in a sense the barrier, and again, on the other hand, leads to the Unity of Self. Such is the *ahaṃ-kāra* or egotism (i.e., the action of the Self) that is spread all around the universe. The Day when we shall understand that "my" work is "His" work, is the day when the meaning of *So'ham* (or I am the Self) is truly realized.

This *So'ham* is symbolized by the *Barzakh.* And how beautifully has this significance been explained by Sardar Iqbal Ali in his *Islamic Sufism*!

Life offers a scope for ego activity and death is the first test of the synthetic activity of the ego. *Barzakh* is a state of consciousness characterized

by a change in the ego's attitude towards time and space. It was Helmholtz who first discovered that nervous excitation takes time to reach consciousness. If this is so, our present psychological structure is at the bottom of our present view of time, and if the ego survives the dissolution of this structure, a change in our attitude towards time and space seems perfectly natural. The enormous condensation of impression which occurs in our dream life, and the exultation of memory which sometimes takes place at the moment of death, disclose the ego's capacity for different standards of time. The state of *Barzakh,* therefore, does not seem to be merely a passive state of expectation; it is a state in which the ego catches a glimpse of fresh aspects of Reality, and prepares himself for readjustment of those aspects.

Another Sanskrit word for *kīlaka* is *śalya,* which is also found to be used in this significant sense in the *Mahābhārata.* There the two parties *Kauravas* and *Pāṇḍavas* are assembled together to fight against each other in the holy field of *Kurukṣetra,* symbol of the spatio-temporal order of the mental being. The *Kauravas* are partisans of secular knowledge and the *Pāṇḍavas* of spiritual knowledge. The best charioteer of the first is Śalya, (lit., "bar," to spiritual knowledge), who is always obstructing his partisans of secular knowledge from seeing face to face, Kṛṣṇa, the charioteer (or *sārathī*) of the other group, whose head is Yudhiṣṭhira, always calm in his endeavours in (spiritual) warfare. The party of Yudhiṣṭhira, like that of Moses in the *Qurān,* is to realize the Self after the end of Holy War where all conflicts in the Self will at last disappear. So long as the Great Conflict does not die out, one is to rely on his spiritual Guide symbolized in the figure of Kṛṣṇa, who is always attracting the (mental) soul to realize Self. Again, though all the great heroes of the Kauravas are killed either by Arjuna or Bhīma, the great impediment to spiritual knowledge, the hero Śalya, is killed by Yudhiṣṭhira, the one spiritual soul, who at last reaches Heaven (i.e., realizes the Self) while in his physical body.

A free soul has no birth or death. The moment he comes under the influence of any duality (or manifoldness) he is taken under a Cover. Accordingly, the Upaniṣadic prayer "*Apāvṛṇu*" (i.e., put aside the Cover) is the earnest desire of any soul, which under bondage sings thus:

> With the golden Cover is hidden the face of Truth; O Pūṣan (or Sun), the Self-developing One, let the hidden Secret be disclosed for realization — the Secret which is the same, as in Your Self so in my Self (*Īśopaniṣad,* 15).

HARENDRA CHANDRA PAUL

ESMÉ WYNNE-TYSON

# The Decline and Fall of the *Bona Dea*

[This is the second and concluding part of Mrs. Wynne-Tyson's long and thought-provoking article. The first part appeared in our March issue.—ED.]

## II

IT IS TRUE that in very ancient history, we frequently read of animals being sacrificed to the Goddess, especially in her "roles" of Diana and Artemis. In *Lucullus* Plutarch tells us that certain heifers were sacred to Persia Artemis,

> a goddess whom the barbarians on the further side of the Euphrates hold in the highest honour. These heifers are used only for sacrifice, and at other times are left to roam about the country at large, with brands upon them in the shape of the torch of the Goddess.[1]

It should be noticed that this butchery was always done by the male priests, and was in every case a violation of the demand made for all time by the Goddess of the Eleusinian Mysteries intended to *civilize* man — that no blood should be shed on her altars. Even for the highly important priestly purification, symbolized by the rite of castration, no knife was employed at Athens; instead, a concoction of hemlock was applied which, we are told, had the same effect.

The weakening of the power, prestige, and influence of the female element in religion must obviously have been a gradual process, but probably accelerated by the change of policy at the naming of Athens about which Augustine tells us in his *City of God* when, a name having to be agreed upon, the choice lay between the God in his role of Neptune and the Goddess, Minerva. The women, faithful to Wisdom, voted for Minerva, or Athene, and, being more numerous, carried the day. But for their triumph they paid dearly; for until that time women were enfranchised, and able to leave their names to their children, which suggests a real equality with men. But, for the naming of Athens, they incurred three penalties imposed by appeasers of the angry God: "First, they must never hereafter have a vote in council; second, never hereafter be called Athenians; third, nor even leave their name to their children."

This otherwise unaccountably harsh treatment suggests that advantage

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[1] It is interesting to note that the Torch was also one of the signs of Mithras, whose cult was, as we know, of Persian origin; and it survives in the Tarot cards designed to preserve the teachings of the Mysteries when, after the victory of the Christian Church, these were banished from the face of the earth and had to go underground.

was taken of a time of crisis (the jealous God having flooded the land), to increase masculine domination, a plan of probably long standing. Athens indeed remained the city of Wisdom but at the cost of penalizing and weakening the human votaries of the Goddess as well as her spiritual and temporal powers.

Nevertheless, the equation of women with wisdom was persistent. The Sibyl of Cumae continued to influence the rulers of Rome, at least until the reign of the Emperor Aurelian. And, just as the early colonizers would make no decision for war until they had consulted the oracle at Delphi, so the governors of Rome would go to what were believed to be the inspired writings of this wise woman — said to have been seven hundred years old in the days of Aeneas! — before making political and other decisions, believing that her advice would guide them aright.

The last trace of the worship of the Goddess seems to have been banished from the West when the Temple of Vesta and her revered Virgins was closed by order of Theodosius the Great and its sacred fire extinguished. But by that time the figure of the Magna Mater and her Child had suffered a metamorphosis. The theologians of the new religion, unable to do entirely without her, reproduced her as a mortal woman, a Jewish virgin highly favoured by God who visited her in the guise of the Holy Spirit in order that she might bear him a Son. There was a vast difference of opinion that led to passionate disputes over the formulation of this doctrine, one school of thought going so far us to assert that the Father Himself entered the virgin's womb, thereby becoming his own son.

We are inclined to forget that such ideas did not sound so fantastic, so downright insane, to the ears of the congregations to whom they were first taught as they do to ours. For centuries humanity had been familiar with the idea found in Greek legends of the King of Heaven visiting some nymph or mortal woman and the result of their union being a demigod. Perseus, Zagreus, Dionysus, were all credited with such miraculous births; and the mothers of great men were also believed to have had commerce with the Sun-God, who usually appeared to them in the form of a serpent. Olympias, the mother of Alexander the Great, was most embarrassed by the proclamation of this deific condescension, fearing Juno's wrath. The mother of the deified Augustus Caesar was also said to have been similarly "honoured."

There was also the even closer parallel of the prophetess of Delphi, originally a virgin, who, sitting naked on a hollow tripod, was said to be filled with the Holy Spirit of the God which impregnated her from an underground stream, so that, in her ecstasy, she might give birth to the *Logos*, or inspired Word, which seems much the same idea that we find in

the first chapter of the Gospel according to John, who made no reference at all to an ordinary human birth. Nestorius produced the very reasonable argument that the eternal God cannot have a mother and it was impossible that the Godhead should have been carried for nine months in a woman's womb; which was similar to the point of view later taken by the Protestants, but not until the arguments of the theologians on this subject had led to torture on the rack and burning at the stake.

That the Catholics were right in imagining that a popular religion needed the figure of the Great Mother is proved by the numerical superiority of the Catholic Church. Whatever is officially taught about the Virgin Mary not being considered a deity, in actual fact it is to the Mother of God that Catholics most frequently pray; and what to non-Catholics seemed an inexplicable enthusiasm over the Assumption of the Virgin Mary being made dogma in 1950, was the natural reaction to having what was already the secretly worshipped divinity reinstated once more as Queen of Heaven. Pius XII, well aware of this psychological need, and, presumably, of the desirability of more of her qualities in Catholic congregations, made much of returning the *Bona Dea* to her rightful home. It is true that she is not yet accorded even equality with her Son and Consort, still remaining the Mediatrix rather than the balancing deific power of Love and Wisdom, and so still subservient to male policies and decisions, but at least this exalting of the deific feminine elements was a step in the right direction. C. G. Jung, in his *Answer to Job*, seems fully to have understood the implications of the Assumption. He writes:

> It was recognized even in prehistoric times that the primordial divine being is both male and female. But such a truth eventuates in time only when it is solemnly proclaimed or rediscovered. It is psychologically significant for our day that in the year 1950 the heavenly bride was united with the bridegroom.

Unfortunately this symbol of the Goddess's return to power precedes the factual event. The priests have left it a little late to readmit her to the spiritual spheres. After two thousand years of patriarchal religion, the world is rotten with unrelieved masculinity. The Protestants have long since capitulated to literalism and the Jewish viewpoint. As far as their worship and devotions go, the mother of God and her essential characteristics, together with her demands for chastity and non-violence, are entirely ignored, with the result that the non-Catholic Christian churches are as bereft of the feminine element as the most masculine, modern, and materialistic of faiths (if we exclude Marxism) — Islam.

Yet even that, in its earthly history, did not altogether escape the

Mother-Son theme, for Khadija the first and most admirable wife of the Prophet, was, owing to the great disparity in their ages, a most striking human counterpart to the ancient mother-consort figure. A wealthy woman, she encouraged Mohammed, her cousin, to dream rather than to work. If we are to believe his biographer, Sir William Muir, she comforted him very maternally when those dreams, or psychic visions, frightened him and gave him assurance that they came from God and not from evil spirits, as he feared. She took down what they both believed to be the inspired utterances of her almost illiterate kinsman and interested her influential relatives and friends in his cause. In fact, had there been no Khadija, there would probably have been no Islam. In her relation to this latest of prophets, she was undoubtedly the earthly prototype of the Goddess of Wisdom; but one never hears Muslims commenting on her benefactions and, although her tomb is revered, Mohammed seems to get all the adulation and credit. Accentuation of the womanly attributes is notably lacking in a system that allows a man four wives — if he can afford them — and still preserves the primitive custom, so abhorrent to the Goddess, of animal sacrifice.

Nevertheless, the Prophet at least had the influence of his motherly consort in his early manhood, and duly acknowledged her excellence and her superiority to the younger wives of the flesh who succeeded her; whereas Marxism, which some regard as the modern equivalent to religion, and which is certainly a living faith, has no trace in its philosophy of the Love-Wisdom Goddess. Total utilitarianism being both its creed and aim, any reactionary impediments such as compassion or speculative philosophy would be regarded as anti-social. In this system woman is openly reduced to a work-slave, with the "privilege," which is also a duty, of working in and out of the home, like the Eastern races who strap their infants on their back while they work in the fields, although the scientific termitary generously supplies crèches for the Western worker-ants' progeny.

So we find that, with the decline and fall of the power and prestige of the *Bona Dea,* her earthly representatives lost their influence in human policies. Worship for the mighty power-loving God led to contempt and scorn for feminine virtues and values; and women who were true to their original nature came to be regarded as second-class citizens. Although the women of the West have regained the enfranchisement lost at the naming of Athens, the price they have paid for it is the abandonment of the worship of the gentle *Bona Dea*, and capitulation to the policies of the male. (Emmeline Pankhurst actually accelerated the bestowal of the vote by her vigorous recruiting efforts in the first world war!)

Looking back to the days of the beloved Kypris and Ceres of the

Cornfields we can only view with horror the deterioration of the character of women from what was their ideal state. But this was made inevitable by depriving them of their Divinity; for that meant that they no longer had an ideal on which to model themselves. Today men, who banished woman from their altars in order to ensure their own dominion and pre-eminence, are afraid of a world from which the gentler qualities of the Goddess have vanished. They are beginning to look for help to what used to be called man's "better half," only to find, all too often, an imitation man or a temptress.

Only by repenting of his desertion of her bloodless altars can man hope to bring about the Goddess's return. Only by worshipping her attributes and showing that these are what he desires in his womenfolk can he make amends for his blind folly in dethroning and degrading his "civilizer," the *Bona Dea*. And if he thus repents, it will surely be less a question of "admitting" women to the ministry than of imploring them to return to a vocation for which, long before Christian priests existed, they showed themselves to be naturally and admirably fitted.

ESME WYNNE-TYSON

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## Emily Dickinson

Bidding the world goodnight
You basked in secret light
And with mellifluous words
Like brightly plumaged birds
You sublimated pain
Transforming loss to gain.

HERBERT BLUEN

B. C. LAW

# Who Were the Abhiras?

[We are glad to have this note from the pen of our learned friend Dr. B. C. Law, M.A., LL.B., PH.D., D.LITT., F.R.A.S. (Hony.), Membre D'Honneur de la Société Asiatique de Paris. He collates references from various ancient Indian and some Greek texts to demarcate the geographical and historical position of the Ābhīras, who are referred to from the *Mahābhārata* downwards.—ED.]

THE ABHIRAS were a band of simple and sturdy people, mostly cowherds and agriculturists, abounding largely in groups in the United Provinces, Bihar, Nepal and some portions of Rajputana.

Opinions differ about their location. The great Epic[1] assigns them to the western division of India (*Aparānta*). This epic evidence is supported by the author of the *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea* of the first century B.C. and also by the Greek geographers, Ptolemy (middle of the second century A.D.), and by the later epigraphic evidence. The *Viṣṇupurāṇa*,[2] supported by the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*,[3] places them in the west along with the Surāṣṭras, Śūdras, Arbudas, Kārūṣas, and Mālavas. They dwelt along the Pāripātra mountains. The Vālhīkas, Vāṭadhānas, Śūdras (Śūras), Madrakas, Surāṣṭras, and Sindhu-Sauvīras occupied the tracts of the country which are included in the western division of India. The *Mahābhārata*[4] gives us a more definite location for the Ābhīras, who are placed in west Rajputana where the Sarasvatī disappears. Some Purāṇas place them in the north (*Uttarāpatha*). Al-Biruni is wrong in placing them in the south. Wilson says that the people along the Indus from Surat to the Himalayas are regarded as western or northern nations.[5]

The Ābhīras were associated with the Śūdras, most probably identical with the Sodrai or Sogdoi of the Greek historians of the time of Alexander. Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* of the second century B.C. (I.2.3) is perhaps the earliest authority to introduce the Ābhīras into Indian history. Both the Great Epic[6] and the Purāṇas testify to the tradition of their association with the Śūdras or Śūras. The Ābhīras had something to do with the events which happened after the Kurukṣetra war. The Yādavas of Gujarat met with a great disaster by their fratricidal contest. They left Dvārakā and Gujarat and went northwards, but they were attacked and destroyed by the Ābhīras of Rajputana.

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[1] *Mahābhārata* "*Sabhāparva*," Ch. 51

[2] Ed. WILSON, Book II, Chap. III, pp. 132-5

[3] Ch. 57, vv. 35-36 [4] IX. 37.1 [5] *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, III. 168, fn. 4

[6] *Mahābhārata*, IX. 87. 1

Both Ptolemy and the *Periplus* point to the close association of the Ābhīras with the Surāṣṭras.[7] The country of Aberia is identical with Ābhīra and its seaboard Syrastrene (Surāṣṭra). This is what the *Periplus* says. Ptolemy's Abiria (Ābhīra) is included in Indo-Scythia. This well explains the fact that the whole of the country covers the lower course of the Indus. Ptolemy's Indo-Scythia includes Syrastrene (Surāṣṭra), Patalene (*Praśthala*; Sanskrit, *Pātāla*), and Abiria (Ābhīra). Abiria is identified with the region east of the Indus above the insular portion formed by its bifurcation.[8]

The Bactrian Greeks overpowered the Ābhīras by the middle of the second century B.C. They wanted to extend their dominion to the south of the Hindukush long after the expedition of Antiochus III of Syria (223–187 B.C.). Indo-Scythia, which included Aberia or Abiria, was occupied by Bactrian Greeks. In Ptolemy's time the Ābhīra country (Abiria) was governed by the Śaka satraps or Kṣatrapas of western India, who seem to have held sway over the entire realm of Indo-Scythia.[9] The Junāgaḍh inscription of the Śaka ruler Rudradāman of the second century A.D. bears testimony to this fact. The Ābhīra general Rudrabhūti excavated a tank in his kingdom.[10] The Mahākṣatrapa Īśvaradatta seems to have been the same person as the Ābhīra king Īśvarasena, son of Śivadatta, who became the Mahākṣatrapa of western India and who forcibly took possession of some portions of Mahārāṣṭra from the Sātavāhana rulers of this region, probably in the third century A.D. It is suggested that this dynasty of Īśvarasena is identical with the Traikūṭaka line of *Aparānta* and that the establishment of the Traikūṭaka era in A.D. 248 marks the time when the Ābhīras succeeded the Sātavāhanas in the government of northern Mahārāṣṭra and the adjoining region.

The Allahabad Iron Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta (second quarter of the fourth century A.D.) refers to the Ābhīras as one of the tribes of the west and south-west of India who paid homage to him. The Ābhīras were thus a semi-independent people living outside the borders of his empire. They had another settlement in the south or Dakṣiṇāpatha. They are classed with the Puṇḍrakas, Keralas, Kaliṅgas, Pulindas, Āndhras, Vidarbhas, Kuntalas, and others who also dwelt in the south (*Dakṣiṇāpathavāsinaḥ*).[11]

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[7] It comprises modern Kathiawad and other portions of Gujarat. For details *vide* LAW: *Tribes in Ancient India*, pp. 347 ff.; *Geography of Early Buddhism*, p. 58.

[8] MCCRINDLE: *Ptolemy*, pp. 136, 139-40

[9] *Epigraphia Indica*, VIII, pp. 36 ff.

[10] Cf. *The Gunda Inscription of the Śaka ruler Rudrasiṁha*, A.D. 181

[11] *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*, 57, vv. 45-48; 58, v. 22; Cf *Vāyupurāṇa*, Chs. 45, 126. The Ātabyas, Śabaras, and Daṇḍakas belonged to the south.

The Ābhīras or Ahirs had a settlement in Nepal in ancient times. After a long line of legendary kings Nepal passed into the hands of Kirāta pretenders, who were succeeded by eight princes of the Gopal dynasty. The Gopalas were later supplanted by the Ābhīras.

B. C. LAW

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## In Memoriam: Nandalal Bose

THIS MONTH, a year ago, there passed away an eminent artist, who enshrined in himself and in his hundreds of artistic creations the soul of India. For he fervently believed that the soul of Art is the art of the soul, whether it be the soul of the individual, the people, or the universe; and these constitute, indeed, an immutable entity or existence. "The Face of Allah shines everywhere," says the Book, revealed to Prophet Mohammed (on whom be Peace!).

The name of the artist is Shri Nandalal Bose. For over fifty long years he fed, with the oil of his aspirational effort, the light of the renaissance in indigenous art, kindled by the master-artist, Shri Abanindranath Tagore, during the first decade of the current century. Thus he proved himself to be a divinely-destined collaborator of the illustrious sponsor of the Movement.

The artists who came under the influence of the Movement had a kind of a *credo*. It was enunciated by Shri Nandalal Bose in the following words:

> We are marching towards the Unknown because it is only the present that exists for us and not the past or the future.
>
> We are Indian because we are trying to keep up the Indian spirit, although, irrespective of style and technique, we welcome everything that has life, accept with regard all that those who come in touch with us have to offer.
>
> And it is for this reason that we do not attach much importance to technique and worship life—the spirit of the living.
>
> Nature inspires us and the past. The past experiences of the world guide us.
>
> We have tried to express our joy because Art is the expression of the joy (*ānanda*) of life.

It is no wonder, then, that seeing a painting of Shri Nandalal Bose, exhibited, perhaps for the first time in an International Art Exhibition, held in Geneva, during the thirties, an art critic and connoisseur observed with insight, "It reveals a whole civilization."

The secret of this great artist's revelation of the soul of the universe and the soul of his people lay in his own harmonious self. The man and the artist in him were not two separate entities, but one unified whole being. He generally lived and laboured in the silence of the Eternal and in the eternity of Silence. He was a man reticent and retiring by nature. But in doing deeds of compassion and community-service, he was always active, invariably taking care, however, to see to it that even his left hand did not know what his right hand did to lighten the life's burden of his fellow beings. In this way the legacy of his own life is richer than the legacy of his innumerable paintings, sketches, and picture postcards. Today his living touch is at work among most of the artists of the generation that is passing away. But inasmuch as both he and his art had the transmuting touch of the Eternal, they will continue to inspire all those who are devoted to the pursuit — nay, sacramental service — of the Beautiful. Truly did Poet Rabindranath Tagore hail him and bless him in his own inimitable manner:

"You imprison in your lines the Eternal wonder. May your brush be like the matted hair of Śiva — the source of the waters of life!"

My salutation then, to you, O wizard weaver of patterns of colour and cadence on the loom of life!

GURDIAL MALLIK

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R. M. FOX

# Social Criticism in the Irish Theatre

[Our old friend, Mr. R. M. Fox, is an author, journalist, and dramatic critic, and especially a student of contemporary Irish history and literature. In this short article he sketches the attitudes to social criticism that have arisen in the Irish drama since Yeats founded the Abbey Theatre.—Ed.]

WHEN Yeats started the Abbey Theatre, at the turn of the century, he initiated a distinctive Irish drama. He had a very definite idea as to the content of this. He wanted heroic legendary drama and also peasant plays. He did not want the drawing-room play or the drama of big modern cities. He was hostile to plays about the middle class, who, in any case, counted for little in the Ireland of his day.

Although the rise of the Irish drama movement belongs roughly to the same period as Ibsen it was soon clear that Yeats had no sympathy with Ibsen's social drama, which he dismissed contemptuously as "plays about town councils and drains." He fell out with Edward Martyn, a wealthy and influential backer of the early Abbey, because Martyn wanted to write of the Irish middle class in the Ibsen manner. Yeats rejected his play.

This attitude gave an early bias to the Irish dramatic movement which it has had ever since. Yeats tacked over the portals of the Abbey Theatre an invisible sign which read "No Propaganda." Although invisible, it came to be clearly understood. Plays with a message of a contemporary social character were not wanted.

If we look at Irish drama since Yeats's time we see that the original bias remains. In Britain there has been the "kitchen sink" school which has looked at life from a new and critical angle. John Osborne and Arnold Wesker are typical representatives. In America many have worked in the same field. Much earlier Shaw wrote his plays of social criticism, influenced by Ibsen but having the impress of his own iconoclastic mind.

Turning to Ireland, we have seen the triumph of Sean O'Casey, who brought the tenement dwellers of Dublin on to the stage in spite of Yeats's edict against city plays. After six years, during which O'Casey imposed a ban on professional production of his plays in Ireland, the Abbey Theatre received permission from the author to stage *The Plough and the Stars* and *Juno and the Paycock* prior to taking these plays to the Aldwych Theatre, London, as part of the celebrations of the four-hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's birth. Whether the ban is withdrawn for good, has not yet been decided. It was imposed by O'Casey because of the dispute over his play *The Drums of Father Ned*, which led to the abandonment of the 1958 Dublin Theatre Festival.

These two plays are vintage O'Casey and are much appreciated in Dublin, although, during the bitterness of the post–civil-war years, they led to turmoil and disorder. Particularly was *The Plough and the Stars* objected to because of its sardonic attitude to the National struggle. Both are very good plays, full of tenderness and poetry. The feeling one is left with, at the finish, is that the dramatist does not think the suffering and sacrifice which the fighting involved were worth while. Yet it is the individual characterizations that count, together with the group activities of these tenement people with their bursts of hilarity and anguish, alternating like the waving of a tattered flag in the breeze.

O'Casey does not write plays of social criticism any more than the earlier Irish dramatists. He is content to place his characters on the stage. I have seen Abbey audiences moved to laughter and tears at the story of Juno, with its intermingled comedy and pathos. His characters never direct the storm; they are straws in the wind. It is their very helplessness that constitutes part of their appeal. The idea that they could alter the scheme of things rarely occurs to them.

Possibly O'Casey has not felt the urge to put social criticism in his plays. Maybe this does not fit in with his conception of the art of the dramatist. Yet I recall that Æ (G. W. Russell) once told me that O'Casey had submitted "about a dozen" plays to the Abbey which could not be used because they were "full of propaganda." It certainly looks as if the Yeats prohibition helped to shape the mature plays of O'Casey.

In the early days of O'Casey's success I contributed an article to the London *New Statesman* in which I suggested that O'Casey's tenement characters, like those of most dramatists who write "low life" plays, were not typical workers. They are men who do not fit easily into their surroundings. The typical worker is a man who goes to work, goes home, goes to sleep, and goes back to work again. While this conduct may be admirable it does not make for drama. So O'Casey, like other dramatists of this school, picks out characters at odds with circumstance who, because of the conflict, strike sparks which excite the audience.

In his autobiographical book *Inishfallen, Fare Thee Well,* O'Casey refers to this criticism and resents it. But he refrains from saying whether it is true or not. If his characters are not typical workers it is more difficult to advance a line of social criticism based on their activities.

At a recent Dublin Theatre Festival the Brecht play *St. Joan of the Stockyards* was presented, with that leading Irish actress, Siobhan McKenna, playing the lead, splendidly staged by Hilton Edwards, with impressive sets. This was a social criticism at the highest level. For all that it was not liked very much in Dublin. This, in itself, suggests that there is something in the Irish temperament which shies away from social

criticism on the stage. Yeats may have been a true expression of the Irish mind when he rejected Ibsen and his successors. But it could be that *St. Joan of the Stockyards* was too remote from Irish life to hold interest.

A few plays have not fitted in the Abbey mould and one dramatist has written plays of social criticism which have proved popular throughout the country. This is John B. Keane, the Kerry playwright, whose first play *Sive* — a girl's name — drew record audiences everywhere. It was an indictment of the "made" marriage, with the marriage broker, traditionally associated with rural Ireland and the life of the farms.

Since his early success, which won a National drama award, Keane has written plays dealing with the inheritance of small farms, with emigration, and with the plight of country girls who come to Dublin to work, and the lonely desolate lives they lead in "bed-sitter" lodgings. Always he stresses the human aspect. Keane himself, although he lives in a small Kerry town, has been an emigrant to Britain and knows his subject through and through, while he is also fairly representative of the life of the country. The Abbey has recently presented two of his plays but his earlier plays were staged elsewhere. While the dramatic content of these plays is undeniable and they have great audience appeal, they have a strong note of social criticism. This may have delayed his recognition by the Abbey; for he came up against the traditional Yeats bias of "no propaganda."

The absence of social criticism in many Irish plays makes them poorer and more trivial than they should be; for, in essence, it means an absence of thought concerning vital social issues. In *John Bull's Other Ireland* Shaw touched on this when he spoke of everything in Ireland being drowned in unmeaning, cynical laughter, the loud "Haw-haw" which engulfs good and bad ideas indiscriminately. Oliver Goldsmith touched the same theme when in "The Deserted Village" he refers to "the loud laugh that speaks the vacant mind."

If this is to be corrected, Ireland needs plays of social criticism, bringing home sharply the defects and drawbacks of modern Irish life. Up till now the plays have tended to be poetic or rhetorical. The Irish style of acting has suited this admirably. In voice, gesture, and melodious tone, Abbey actors have contributed something splendid to the theatre, something quite different in manner and content from the English or the American stage. If the dramatists can now add a note of social criticism to their plays they will vitalize the Irish stage and contribute much to the national life.

R. M. FOX

# New Books and Old

## An Unusual Approach to Hindu Culture*

THIS UNUSUAL STUDY aims at providing a comprehensive outline of the Hindu mind and culture derived consistently from a simple psychological hypothesis. The thesis of the book is that the Hindu psyche differs radically from the Occidental. Accepting the Freudian assumption that there are two kinds of psychic energy, libido and aggressiveness, it is sought to establish by a wealth of examples drawn from the doctrines and legends of the principal sects and from the facts of political history that, as between Hindu and European, these two psychic forces are interchanged. In Europe the punitive personality type is normal, the narcissistic exceptional; in India the narcissistic type is normal, the punitive exceptional.

The terms used here may need some explanation. In Greek mythology, Narcissus was a youth who died of excessive self-admiration. Freud used the word "narcissism" in a technical sense to indicate cases in which an excess of libido is directed towards the ego. Freud's hypothesis is based upon data obtained wholly from Occidental sources, and is associated with uncomplimentary value judgements, as is evident from the writings of Freudians like Ernest Jones, who has made a special study of the phenomenon from the Western angle. The merit of this book is to show that it is possible to view the matter from a diametrically opposed standpoint. The point was broached by K. V. Rajan, a trained analyst and social worker, but not pursued. Mr. Spratt does this and argues with great plausibility that most of the outstanding peculiarities of Hindu culture and civilization, its ethics and philosophy, are direct expressions of the narcissistic structure. The Hindu conscience derives from this.

As against this, stands out the punitive Western type, in which much aggressiveness is directed against the ego. Libido and aggressiveness are mutually antagonistic. According to psychoanalytic theory, the child in its early years assimilates current ideals and the example of adults, and these form the ego-ideal. Actual behaviour falls short of the ideal, but the ego is spurred on by the super-ego, which is an unconscious image of the aggressive side of authority, especially the father; the super-ego draws its strength from the subject's own aggressiveness. The conscience is thus a charge of aggressiveness directed against the ego and forcing it to live up to its ideals. The emotion which it engenders is that of guilt.

Stated briefly, the Occidental conscience is a product of fear, while the Hindu counterpart is a product of pride. The Hindu's principal moral emotion is aspiration. The Hindu strives to act rightly or to improve himself, not so much out of guilt feeling as out of love for himself, and derivatively for the ideal. The author says, "The Hindu ego-ideal is undoubtedly more idealistic than the European." The gap between ideal and reality is wide everywhere, perhaps wider than normal in India, but it is well recognized, and the weak super-ego does not cause the subject much distress.

An original feature of this book is a treatment of the basic Hindu concept of the three *Guṇas* on psychoanalytic lines, and the author's conclusion is that "the ancient accounts of the *Sattva*

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*Hindu Culture and Personality : A Psychoanalytic Study.* By PHILIP SPRATT. (P. C. Manaktala and Sons, Bombay. 400 pp. 1966. Rs. 32.00)

*Guṇa* give a faithful account of the narcissistic personality type, though there are also weaker brethren of the same basic structure." The classical example of this type is Yudhiṣṭhira, a *Sāttvic* righteous man of the world, held up to admiration by Professor R. C. Zaehner in his recent book on Hinduism.

Even this is not ultimate ideally. The goal of aspiration is Yoga, which is here described as narcissism carried to the limit. In this state, one of two things may happen: the result may be *Samādhi* in which the outer world vanishes. But in the alternative there is the possibility of a cosmic and comprehensive vision (*Prajñā* or *Pratibhā*), in which the subject may experience an identification with the universe. He loves the universe, for he loves himself. This situation is called "projective extroversion" in this book, which is an English paraphrase for *Jīvanmukti* or *Karmayoga*. Such are the saints, who, even if not men of exceptional ability in other ways, have been outstanding personalities who have exerted a dominating influence on Hindu society. "Hence the exceptionally religious character and high moral principles of Hinduism."

The author confesses that he began with a dislike of Hinduism, but more than thirty-five years of life in India in almost exclusive contact with the Hindus have greatly modified his views. This change is "due principally to the phenomenon which is here called projective extroversion." The author proceeds:

> This mental transformation does not seem to have been discussed previously in a scientific way, nor has its importance in Indian history been pointed out. I suggest that its discovery and cultivation is the best achievement of the culture of India, the chief cause of the influence of Hinduism, and perhaps of Buddhism, and a contribution of very great value to civilization.

The range of this work is truly remarkable, covering as it does the major religions, as well as key concepts like Sacrifice (*Yajña*), *Tapas*, and *Yoga*, Mythology, and Caste. The whole body of literature, sacred and profane, has been drawn upon, as also legend and folklore. The last chapter, on Hindu Society, is marked by great insight. There are two valuable Appendices: the first one makes out that Mahatma Gandhi was essentially a narcissistic type, and not a punitive one as has been generally thought. The other deals briefly with eminent Westerners who belong to the narcissistic type: Montaigne, Spinoza, Goethe, Blake, Shelley, Wordsworth, Walt Whitman, and Nietzsche, a truly formidable and revealing list.

I cannot conclude without paying a tribute to the author, whom I have had the privilege of knowing personally, and for whose sincerity, courage, and breadth of understanding and sympathy I have always had great admiration. I cannot help feeling flattered that he has quoted at considerable length from two of my own books, with appreciation. In writing this book embodying the fruits of his mature experience of India, Mr. Spratt has rendered exceptional service to the land of his adoption. It should contribute materially towards lessening the curious lack of comprehension, and even suspicion, of the Hindu character which has so often characterized foreign estimates.

K. GURU DUTT

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*Hindu Scriptures*. Selected, Translated and Introduced by R. C. ZAEHNER. (Everyman's Library. J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., London; E.P. Dutton and Co., New York. xxiii+328 pp. 1966. 18*s*.)

Aimed at presenting a portion of abiding importance and interest from the vast canon of Hindu scriptures, this latest newly translated original selection comprises mainly the Upanishads and the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Small selections

from the *Rig-Veda* and the *Atharva-Veda* have been included because they look forward and anticipate the Hindu future, in that the gods tend to coalesce into one another, and in so doing lose their identity. The supreme principle is felt to be one, and it does not matter very much what you call it. "What is but one the wise call (by) manifold (names)" (*Rig-Veda*, I.clxiv.46).

The remarkable lucidity of the prose and the lyrical quality of the verse must make the non-Sanskritist regret his inability to enjoy the magic of the originals, reflected in the translations. Professor Zaehner is an ardent admirer of the Upanishads. This could be a major factor contributing to the success of this translation.

The Upanishads contain speculation on the nature of the Universe, on the nature of the inner self of man, and on the relationship between the two. Indians steeped in the popular and apparently amorphous ambience of Puranic folklore or the teaching and parables of the saints would here find its underlying speculative basis brought into a sharp focus by critical analysis. The Upanishads are not merely the product of intellectual cogitation; they are rooted in direct experience. With the development of physical sciences and psychology the umbral border lines of the supernatural are continually being transformed into half-tones of the penumbra. A case in point would be the new-found significance of the dream state now being investigated by the psychologists. Yet Professor Zaehner in his introduction tends to consider the preoccupation of the Upanishads with dream and dreamless sleep "odd."

Believers in the scriptures have always found ample verification for the validity of scriptural speculation in the experiences of the saints right down to modern times: Shri-Ramana-Maharshi said:

> I was not a pessimist. I knew nothing of life and had not learnt that it was full of sorrow. I was not actuated by any desire to avoid rebirth or seek Liberation or even to obtain dispassion or salvation. I had read no books except the *Periapuranam*, the Bible and bits of Tevaram. I had never heard of Brahman, sansara and so forth. I did not yet know that there was an Essence or Impersonal Real underlying everything and that Iswara and I were both identical with it. Later, at Tiruvannamalai, as I listened to the *Ribhu-Gita* and other sacred books, I learnt all this and found that the books were analysing and naming what I had felt intuitively without analyses or name ... . (Arthur Osborne, *Ramana Maharshi*, Rider, p. 24)

An important point often overlooked by some Western philosophers is that speculation is not the prime function of the Upanishads. The Upanishad is a weapon:

> Take up (thy) bow, the Upanishad, a mighty weapon!
> Fit in (thine) arrow sharpened by devotion!
> Stretch it on thought allied to determination (*bhava*)!
> The Imperishable! This is the target, friend: (so) pierce it.
>
> (*Mundaka Upanishad*)

Shri-Ramakrishna also said: "Books, scriptures, and things like that only point out the way to reach God. After finding the way, what more need is there of books and scriptures? Then comes the time for action." ("M.," *Gospel of Shri Ramakrishna*, p. 704)

M. G. BHOJRAJ

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*Ta'rīkhi-i Dawlat-i Fāṭimiyya*. Urdu. By SAYYED RA'IS AHMAD JA'FARI NADWI. (Institute of Islamic Culture, Club Road, Lahore. 530 pp. Illustrated. 1965. Rs. 12.00)

Ismailism is a fascinating subject for the student of Islam. For the first time in its long history, the claim was made that the interpretation of Holy Writ was to be, not literal and logical, but

allegorical and intuitive. The Imām (Leader) was the sole interpreter of the faith, who should be followed explicitly and implicitly. The schism propounded the theory of the God-appointed Imām as Leader of the community, not one who was elected by the suffrage of the people. This Urdu book fills a real need, but, unfortunately, it is neither systematic nor critical; it does not take into account the many adverse claims of its opponents, and is too fulsome in its praise to be deemed a critical and scholarly survey: it almost reads like a command performance.

Any serious author beginning to write on this complex subject would be expected to begin by giving a systematic account of the world of Islam — particularly the Baghdad Caliphate — into which Ismailism was born. It is only after such a disquisition that the remarkable career of the founder of the Fatimid Empire, Mahdi, can be really understood. Instead of this we have a rigmarole about the reforms introduced by the dynasty, and a number of events and anecdotes, neither in logical nor in chronological order; and then a very sketchy and unsatisfactory treatment of the origins of Ismailism.

It is nowhere shown that there are at least *nine* pedigrees supporting the claims of the Fatimids to legitimate descent; that while Ibn Khaldūn and Maqrīzī are favourable to them, many others are opposed to their claims; that among modern scholars, except Ivanow, none of the specialists are entirely convinced of their wide claims; and finally, that the majority of serious and sympathetic scholars who have not divorced themselves from the critical faculty can only say that the claim of the Fatimid *Imāms* to legitimate descent from Ali is neither proved nor disproved, but is what the Indian Evidence Act designates as "not proved."

This is hardly the forum to examine all the questionable statements made by the author, but a few may perhaps be mentioned.

At p. 35 (note 66), Ibn Hānī is cited, without mention being made of the classic edition of his *dīwān* by Zāhid 'Alī.

At p. 37, there is no mention of the *al-Hidāyatu'l-Āmiriyya* (Oxford, Islamic Research Association Series, 1938) which throws a flood of light on the question of the succession of the Fatimid Caliph al-'Āmir.

At pp. 56–57 several doctrinal matters are discussed, but Zāhid 'Alī's cogent reasoning to the contrary is omitted.

At p. 167, the genealogy of the Fatimids is discussed as cursorily as if Bernard Lewis, Ivanow, and Stern had never worked on this vexed problem.

At p. 187, the bewildering statement is made that the Fatimids created a secular state. This is so amazing a statement as almost to embarrass systematic refutation!

But we must not end on a merely critical note; the explanation of the Ismaili Calendar contains a good deal of valuable material, although it could have been more scientific if the relation between the Ismaili calendar and the old Jewish reckoning had also been discussed scientifically.

The book, in spite of its faults, is a good beginning and, apart from the two scholarly works of Dr. Zāhid 'Ali, is the longest popular account of the Fatimids, and as such most welcome. Without reference to recent researches by Ivanow, Massignon, Corbin, Bernard Lewis, and Stern, however, the work remains more or less unsatisfactory for purposes of research or serious study.

A. A. A. FYZEE

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*Principles of Empirical Realism: Philosophical Essays.* By DONALD CARY WILLIAMS. (Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, Ill., U.S.A. 471 pp. 1966. $14.50)

Professor Williams is a seasoned

American philosopher and his book bears on every page the stamp of serious and sincere thinking about issues of momentous significance in philosophy. Though this book is a collection of essays, the unity of the whole is not interrupted and in spite of "a stray plurality of essays" the continuity of thought is not disturbed. Empiricism and realism are so closely linked together in the author's thought that he can only conceive the one without the other as bereft of any significance. Professor Williams is not much enamoured of any fashions in contemporary philosophy and, for an American philosopher, it is really remarkable today to resist the lure of logical positivism and linguistic analysis. He has the modesty to admit that "no human utterance can be the whole truth about anything" and the courage to challenge the current insistence that "the philosopher has no function except the analysis of the forms of discourse, logical grammar, conceptual schemes, and the like."

The essays range over a wide variety of subjects, from the nature of consciousness, through the problems of empirical certainty, truth and error, and the analysis of propositions, to the Myth of Passage and the meaning of Good. The arguments are refreshingly persuasive and though the language might appear to some as all too American in its homely mould of expression, it is none the less vigorous and full of incisive wit.

It is a pity that even philosophers prefer to move in their own regional traditions and ignore the significance of realistic thought outside their own confines of language. This is the reason perhaps why Professor Williams cannot consider realism which is not bound up with empiricism. But his philosophizing is marked by remarkable lucidity and precision of thought and his formulation of the thesis which he combats is as clear and fair as that of the one he advocates. Finally, his book has the merit which every philosophic treatise ought to have: it forces even those who disagree with the views to undertake a re-assessment of their conclusions.

S. VAHIDUDDIN

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*Towards International Co-operation.* By SULWYN LEWIS. (The Commonwealth and International Library. Pergamon Press, Oxford. 327 pp. Maps. 1966. 25*s*.)

Modestly presented as background material for late-teen-age class-discussion on current affairs, this "textbook" by a Welsh headmaster is worthy of a wider public. As a pocket repository of challenging information on the unsolved problems — medical, institutional, nutritional — of our rapidly multiplying species, it could hardly be bettered. In Indonesia "a woman dies in childbirth every quarter of an hour and a baby every minute." The maps are eloquent, the index serviceable, the keynote quotations apt, the test-questions teasingly well-devised.

It is "neither a history nor a geography book" — for, though partly these, it is much else as well. One expertise relevant to the subject-matter but to which no special claim is made is international relations as academically understood. Here the approach is socially wholesome rather than sociologically profound. What we all need is to forgo our nationalisms, our prejudices, our apathies, our ignorance. The closer we are together the less will we go to war. Mr. Lewis sees the behavioural standards of men in their dealings with men as higher than those of states with other states. Which men? Which states?

Mr. Lewis is commendably reluctant to overstress his own opinions. "The exercises and book-lists at the end of each chapter are designed to encourage

the reader to acquaint himself with standpoints other than those of the author." In the section on the ideologies his résumé of the Communist position is followed by the objections of a hypothetical Briton: but the prophets of the leftist revolution are then allowed a further say. Less favoured, however, are the believers in apartheid, who are given no chance of refuting what Mr. Lewis offers as "the Bantu case." A question here germane is how this South African problem comes to figure under "Racial Prejudice," rather than in the very useful section on nationalism, where, in reality as opposed to popular mythology, it basically belongs. Is he, too, touched with that "ideological intolerance" which he lists among the obstacles to be overcome? "Until recently little was known by educationists of the best way to teach ... so that the children could acquire an attitude of tolerance and sympathy towards other and distant human beings."

Likewise inviting reconsideration for any later edition are lesser points on the organization of peace. For instance, the dates — 1932 (? 1931) for the Japanese invasion of Manchuria (p. 206); and 1936 (? 1934) for Russia's admission to the League (p. 205). And is the United Nations indeed so near a replica as Mr. Lewis supposes of the League (p. 207)? The Council too, he tells us, is empowered to decide on the existence, *inter alia,* of a "breach of the law [*sic*]"! (p. 208). And the World court, we read, has always in practice included "one judge" (? one judge each) from the "Big Five" powers (p. 209).

C. A. W. MANNING

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*Christian Revelation and World Religions.* Edited and introduced by JOSEPH NEUNER. (Compass Books. Burns and Oates, London. 186 pp. 1967. Paperback, 15*s*.)

It would seem to be the function of Compass Books to present the new image of the Roman Catholic Church in detail from many angles. Nothing to this end could be more effective than the present volume of the series. It seems but yesterday that the Roman Church existed to proclaim, "Outside the Church there is no salvation," and to mean by "Church" its own communion. How far Roman Catholics have progressed may be read in these essays originally presented as papers to the 1964 Eucharistic Congress at Bombay, held a few days after the epoch-making decree of the Vatican Council concerning the attitude to non-Christian religions.

Along with the Editor, the four contributors, Piet Fransen, Hans Kung, Joseph Masson, and Raymond Panikkar, are scholars of proven integrity and international renown. It is necessary to stress this lest the remarkable positive and eirenical tone of these statements be regarded as casual eccentricity. These men are as concerned with the mission of the Christian Church in the world as any in the "aggressive" or "Christianity the crown" eras. But here we read of the proper place in God's saving purpose of the world's religions; of the way of salvation within these; and of the mission of the Church in terms of service, not conquest. In the final essay Raymond Panikkar, in whose veins runs the blood of Catholic West and Hindu East, discusses the relation of Christians to their non-Christian surroundings, which involves a fresh and deep understanding of Christian sacramental life. This is a heartening and stimulating book which is likely to arouse in all who read it, whether Christian or otherwise, a new appreciation of what religion means in the modern world and to kindle charity with the sense that the universal is greater than the exclusive.

MARCUS WARD

*The Minute Particular: One Man's Story of God.* By E. G. LEE. (Student Christian Movement Press Ltd., London. 191 pp. 1966. 21*s.*)

Mr. E. G. Lee has written a short autobiography concerned primarily with religious experience as he has known it. Early in the book, he tells how he lost his faith in the Anglican Church and later his belief in the divinity of Christ — but never his belief in God. However, the term "belief in God" needs qualification in his case, because he is convinced it means leaving all the gates open, including that of non-belief. This may sound paradoxical, but it is his contention that there now exists for the first time a world of meaning to be found "in the establishment ... of non-religion existing side by side — and with interior respect from both sides — with theologically organized religion." Moreover, both in his view are concerned "with similar passions of the spirit." He himself is at present a Unitarian minister in England.

The problems facing Mr. Lee are ones now facing many Christians throughout the world who can no longer accept the idea of a Christianity that is co-terminous with any one single Church. Likewise, Mr. Lee has come to the conclusion that the old definitions of God are no longer enough. In many modern plays and novels he finds a spiritual commitment which, though often expressed in Christian phrases, rejects Christianity, and can be best summed up in his opinion as "a religion of non-assent." He falls back on the image of an iceberg whose peak showing above the water represents for him semi-organized religion, but whose depths beneath the surface offer a great mass of experience still to be explored. *The Minute Particular* shows one man's sincere attempt to make such an exploration.

In the last chapter, called "Holy Communion," the author gives a deeply moving account of his wife's death after she had endured eight years of cancer with immense courage. When I had finished it, I was reminded of Francis Quarles's words from the seventeenth century: "The heart is a small thing. It is not sufficient for a dog's dinner, yet the whole world is not sufficient for it."

NEVILLE BRAYBROOKE

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*My Life and Thought: An Autobiography.* By ALBERT SCHWEITZER. Translated by C. T. CAMPION. (Unwin Book No. 66. George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London. 225 pp. 1966. 8*s.* 6*d.*)

Like most great figures, Albert Schweitzer has suffered from both indiscriminate adulation and denigration — the latter intensified in later years. Since his death in 1965 at the age of ninety, the passage of time allows emotional fluctuations to subside, and the younger generations, in whom there is also an increasing urge for "service," can hope to see his character and achievements in a truer perspective. Often it is more helpful to go to a man's or woman's own writings than to depend on the image drawn by others, rose-coloured or blue, according to individual opinion.

Dr. Schweitzer's autobiography, here in a paperback edition, after eleven previous impressions of the English translation, brings the man himself sympathetically within reach of everyone. Even though it takes us only up to 1931 (with a postscript up to 1949 by Everett Skillings) it gives three dimensions to his all-round genius, in place of the legend of *le grand Docteur*. Further, his ideal of "reverence for life" will not be just a cliché if the reader assimilates the Doctor's endeavour to define it in the Epilogue to the book.

E. WHITE

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*Those Mysterious Etruscans*. By AGNES CARR VAUGHAN. (Robert Hale, London. 223 pp. Illustrated. 1966. 30*s*.)

The West, nourished on Greece and Rome, has never ceased to wonder about this indeed "mysterious" people, known to the Greeks, who were the precursors, foes, and finally victims of growing Roman power in Italy. Modern research, mainly archaeological, is doing much to unravel the "mystery." How much in "Roman" achievement is due either to primary Etruscan influence or to later mingling of blood can never be determined with precision: our views will be largely temperamental, and Professor Vaughan shows a welcome sympathy for an often despised people, analysing their religious, domestic, political, and artistic aspects; their complex funerary traditions (here both Tuscan and Umbrian tombs offer ample evidence); and their music, dancing, and sports. She stresses the gaiety and humour often found in Etruscan art, though tragic intensity, a sense of death and doom, and an obsessive cruelty are also typical of Etruscan culture as a whole. The cruelty and the complex "superstitions" of religion are certainly evident also in the Romans, as is the Etruscan lack of the Greek, Indian, or Chinese genius for speculative reasoning. On the other hand, to the practical Roman "death *was* the end, while for the Etruscan death meant opening a doors into another life ... ." Is it pure coincidence that Dante and Michelangelo where both born ET(r)uscans?

Professor Vaughan's study, though written in an easy style, is clearly based on thorough research. Detailed descriptions of art (jewellery, sculpture, frescoes rivalling the Egyptian, etc.) are reinforced by twelve excellent illustrations, including the Apollo from Veii, that unhappy town finally razed by the Romans. She is no less interesting on Etruscan history: the strange love-hate relationship between Etruria and Rome (with her Etruscan kings), the crossing of this relation by the plebs-patrician conflicts, and the later ever-changing alliances and wars between Rome, the Etruscans, and the invading Gauls.

Four theories are held as to the origins of the Etruscans: they came from Asia Minor; they were indigenous to Italy; they were invaders from north of the Alps; and Dr. Mayani's view that they were Illyrians later joined by immigrants from Asia Minor. Their language has been tantalizingly half-deciphered; English words like "person," "ceremony," "lantern," "histrionic," "letter," "antenna" (cf. the Etruscans' own name, Rasenna, and the town of Ravenna), are of Etruscan derivation. And (though Professor Vaughan does not mention this) the Etruscan pronunciation of *h-* for initial *c-*, parodied in ancient Rome, still persists in Tuscany (*hasa* for *casa*, etc.) Altogether a fascinating yet scholarly work.

TERENCE WHITE GERVAIS

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*Introduction to Bharata's Nāṭyaśāstra*. By ADYA RANGACHARYA. (Popular Prakashan, Bombay. 80 pp. 1966. Rs. 9.50)

The *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata is the most ancient Sanskrit work on dramaturgy. But it deals with many other subjects besides dramatics proper. Moreover, its diffuse treatment of dramatics is often puzzling. The present work by Adya Rangacharya briefly explains the main features of the theory of Sanskrit drama as propounded in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. There are chapters on the origin of drama, the building of the theatre-house, acting and costume, the writing of plays, and so on.

The author, formerly a Professor of Sanskrit and himself a Kannada dramatist of note, very closely associated with the modern amateur theatre, succeeds in giving the general reader a

clear idea of the theory of Sanskrit drama, which in the main was adhered to by the great Sanskrit dramatists, Kālidāsa, Bhavabhūti, and others. He brings a fresh outlook to bear on the subject and presents many a new point of view. His interpretation of Bharata's account of the origin of drama and his discussion of the possible evolution of the different types of drama are particularly illuminating.

One may not quite agree with some of his views, e.g., that about *sāttvika abhinaya* being charm or grace in acting or the expression of the characteristics of a character-type (pp. 36–37), or that about the five *saṁdhis* being "combinations" of the five *arthaprakṛtis*, understood as the hero's voluntary actions (pp. 60–67). But there can be no doubt that the book will be of immense interest to all students of drama.

It is to be wished that the transliteration of Sanskrit words had been done more carefully; *bhāśa* (for *bhāṣā*), *nīṛvahaṅa, prakṛitī,* etc. should be eyesores to a Sanskritist.

R. P. KANGLE

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BALDOON DHINGRA

# Leaves from a Copenhagen Diary

[Shri Baldoon Dhingra's reflections and recollections are prompted by a recent visit to Copenhagen.—ED.]

WHEN one visits a country one has never seen it is natural, I suppose, to think of its heroes. And in Denmark two names come at once to one's lips: Hans Christian Andersen and Sören Kierkegaard.

Anderson's tales are all delightful and some of them, like "The Princess and the Pea," can be traced, so they say, to an Indian tale — which does not really matter, for when one goes back far enough, to the world of symbols, all stories and all ideas become one.

Take the story of "The Talisman." It belongs to the category of perennial wisdom. What is happiness and where is it to be found? Whether one searches in Greek or Indian myths the answer is ever the same. Seek it within you. And this eternal truth is also to be found, though somewhat less frequently, in Scandinavian legends.

As I landed in Copenhagen I thought of the story of the Prince and Princess who sought a wise man. When he was found, he told them to wander over the world, not to search for the Golden Fleece, but to find a couple who were really happy. In a way, their travels appeared fruitless, but they learned, both of them, two things: one, that contentment is a rare gift on Earth, and, secondly, that to be contented one needs "nothing more than simply to be contented."

Kierkegaard, too, looked inward. He could not stomach the rationalistic approach, and in a way he distrusted too highly the notion, common around him, that God and faith must be dissected or proved.

I do not say the ideas of these two great men are similar, but they give a key to the Danish character, which reflects a quiet and gentle courtesy.

People speak often about the grim and tortuous character of the Nordic people. They speak of their excessive formalism. Stories about Englishmen, Scotsmen, and Irishmen are legion, and there are as many of the other Europeans. In the same way there is one about Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes that I heard at Copenhagen over lunch. When two Danes meet a big business enterprise is concluded; when two Nor-

wegians meet the shipping companies, from London to Tokyo, have been contacted; but when two Swedes meet they are silent: for they have not been introduced.

I spoke in the University of Copenhagen on Epic Literatures and had a feeling the students had discovered some meaning in them which had present-day application. That is why, I suppose, there were about fifty or so in the lecture-hall, an astounding number, I was told, for a sunny day. Sunny days are such rarities in Denmark that almost everything comes to a standstill. People just walk out, leaving offices and shops high and dry. On one occasion, the Professor of Iranian Literature told me, when a distinguished personality from Teheran came to speak there were only two people in the hall: the speaker and himself. This did not, however, discourage the speaker from reading his prepared text.

"You have too much sun," one professor remarked, "and we too little. So you can appreciate how greedily we devour the rays of sunshine." "And we have too much food," he added, "and you too little." I thought of Knut Hamsun's classic, *Hunger*. The University of Copenhagen is simple and unpretentious but has all the comforts you can ask for. The University of Aarhus, a couple of hundred kilometres away, but only twenty-five minutes by air, is well situated and has a quiet, homely atmosphere, like almost anything in Denmark.

I was touched by the gentleness of the people and of the relaxed atmosphere of the place. I did not find much curiosity, it is true, the kind of curiosity I find, for example, each day in Paris. The shops are clean and newly-fashioned, like the hotels and the rest, but of liveliness I saw little. I admired the quiet efficiency which never jarred or irritated. I tried several curio-shops and bookshops and studied the Danish cutlery and silverware and, of course, the new revolving furniture, all in vogue. The little bookshops were littered with erotica of every description and, of course, there were the blood-and-thunder paperbacks in profusion — in all languages — but little else.

My mind switched back to my newspaper vendors, Monsieur and Madame Roberts in Paris. What an astonishing couple and what remarkable psychologists, besides! I have watched them, singly and severally, handing out this or that newspaper and one review after another, with a sleight of hand that never ceases to amaze me. They know, almost at a glance, whether the client will buy *L'Aurore, Le Figaro, Le Canard, Le Parisien, L'Humanité, Le Monde* or *France-Soir*. Both Monsieur and Madame Roberts, whose kiosk is just across the road from where I live, are deeply sensitive though simple people, besides being acute judges of human nature.

I have been to their house and met their talented son who thinks and is aware of trends. I talk to the Roberts about all manner of things — the elections here and in India, about the Common Market, the Kennedy mystery, about China and whatever happens to be the great topic of the day and about themselves too. I suppose Hans Christian Anderson would say these people deserve the Talisman as much as any, for they are just contented people, contented in the midst of endless hardships which they accept with understanding. Imagine getting up at four, spending two hours on a bicycle collecting and distributing newspapers, then at the shop at seven while the wife prepares breakfast! And the round again at the kiosk till twelve. And there again from four to eight. Here is freedom for you, full of responsibility and inner joy and merry laughter on four hours' sleep. But I know what led me to write of the Roberts. Each time I pass a newspaper shop I think of this couple. Can you wonder? For almost everywhere else it

is a mechanical exercise which with most of us is plainly one damned thing after another. How difficult it is to make a monotonous job fresh and exciting! It is made so in the hands of the Roberts.

Upon returning to Paris I heard glowing accounts of the Danish actor Pere Oscarsson's performance in Knut Hamsun's *Hunger*. The film should be seen in India, where hunger of many kinds is to so many a normal thing. The book, as many will remember, deals with the psychopathology of starvation in a highly sensitive and introspective personality. The hero is an author, physically and mentally sick. The pangs of devouring hunger induce in him grotesque and fearful hallucinations. The victim of this torture records his states of consciousness with harrowing fidelity. The story is almost without a plot. It is a searing chronicle in which fleeting moments of hope and inspiration give relief to monotonous days of despair and hunger. What goes on in the delirious mind of the hero is the whole story. But if one looks upon this hunger which is for more things than bread alone, one starts to reflect on the hunger in countries like Denmark for things which food cannot supply. What is that hunger? Perhaps the answer is still to be found, if we paraphrase it for modern needs, in "The Talisman." But the sunny make-believe of Andersen's story is like a myth and when you have to explain a myth its meaning, like a bird on the wing, has flitted away. Fully to understand a myth in spirit and to live with it, you have to be a child or a genius: a hermaphrodite figure at once man and woman, conceiving, begetting, bringing forth spiritually. Lao-tse said: "He who is a man without ceasing to be a woman, will see the truth. The eternal will flow through him, he will become a child again."

"Except ye become as little children ... ."

BALDOON DHINGRA

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# Ends and Sayings

"... ends of verse
And sayings of philosophers."

—SAMUEL BUTLER: *Hudibras*

Russian archaeologists, according to *Sputnik* (a Russian English-language magazine), have found, while exploring caves in the mountain range Bayan-Kara-Ula between China and Tibet, 716 stone discs of a highly puzzling character. Robert Chapman (*Sunday Express*, 12 February 1967) describes these as having a hole at the centre, from which, spiralling out to the edge, run irregular grooves which may, or may not, be writing. They were found near graves estimated as being about 12,000 years old. Examination of the discs showed traces of metal, especially cobalt, and also that they "vibrate as if they carried an electric charge."

In 1960 Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier (in *The Dawn of Magic*—the original French edition) drew attention to various objects excavated in archaeological research whose purpose so mystified archaeologists that museums simply classified them as objects of wor-

ship. Only later were some of them recognized as scientific instruments. One case in point concerned "flat stones" found in Iraq, on display as ritual objects in the Museum at Baghdad, where a German engineer, Wilhelm König, on a chance visit, recognized them as electric batteries — used some two thousand years before re-invented in the West. The authors point out that techniques today become less and less complex and cumbersome, until the apparatus required "shrinks almost to zero." They suggest that future archaeologists, digging in the ruins of our civilization, might, for example, find it difficult to determine the purpose of a recorder magnetic tape, and whether it carried a recording or not.

Controversy is continuing also over the degree of astronomical knowledge possessed by the builders of Stonehenge and other megalithic monuments. John Davy (*The Observer*, 1 January 1967) reports the views of two noted figures. Professor Alexander Thom, Emeritus Professor of Engineering Science at Oxford University, has brought forward evidence to show that even the builders of the simpler stone monuments knew complex moon cycles with a recurrence of 173.3 days, and that other alignments used by them for an elaborate calendar synchronized with those of the other monuments. The five hundred or so examined indicate that the builders may have used a standard measurement unit (2.72 feet) and that they could also lay out circles and ellipses "with extraordinary precision." Professor Fred Hoyle also has produced a mathematically impressive case for Stonehenge as a highly evolved calendar (however primitive its materials), some of whose features seem to show that "a veritable Newton or Einstein must have been at work."

These indications of the degree of scientific knowledge possessed by ancient man will give satisfaction to the supporters of the cyclic theory of world history, who claim that earlier civilizations, still unknown to us generally, have risen and been destroyed, leaving hardly a trace behind — as indeed might happen to our ephemeral metropolitan world. And it may well be that there are further shocks in store for our pride in "modern" achievements.

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Stirrings in the world of thought show that problems of the nature of space and time are much to the fore. So, too, are questions about mystical as well as psychedelic states of consciousness, while contributors to specialist and learned quarterlies are developing ideas from the Hermetic and Neo-Platonic traditions. In the current number of one such quarterly (*The Music Review*, November 1966), Philip Barford stretches the reader's thinking by his article "Feeling, Emotion and Imagery as Dimensions of Harmonic Space." "Harmonic space" means that the three-dimensional space in which sound vibrates is permeated by modalities of musical consciousness, i.e., feeling, emotion, and imagination, which give it added *subjective* dimensions. In music head and heart unite. The head forms "the mathematical image of proportional vibration." The heart (the feeling-centre, and also "the centre of mystical consciousness") endows the Image with its musical force. Boethius' threefold scheme — *musica mundana, musica humana,* and *musica instrumentale* — Mr. Barford says, gives the picture. The first music would seem to represent the harmony of the universal Spirit, or Soul of the World; the second the music of man. The human soul, the twofold link, aspires and:

> This is the mystical way of ascent described by Plotinus leading to the cosmic identity binding the soul to its divine source. But it also looks outward, mediating the impress in self-expression. ... The expressive movement is the consciousness of the heart flowing outwards into space from the central sun of its own being.

From this movement comes the music of limbs, voices, and instruments, expressed in patterns of dance, song, drama, and instrumental performance.

Mr. Barford also suggests three stages in man's development of consciousness. The primitive awareness — with no distinction between objects and the perceiving consciousness — gives way to the rational thought developed over many centuries, which has established the principle of self-consciousness. We think of ourselves as distinct from objects around us. This must lead, eventually, to the third stage of "final participation."

> In this richer experience, the inside and the outside of things, the outer world and the innermost state of feeling and thinking are seen to be planes or aspects of the totality. Whereas the position of objects in space can still be discussed in terms of *place,* place itself is understood as a reduced way of experiencing state. In the same way, the experience of time, which is of course fundamental to music, is nevertheless understood as a rhythmic, or relational modification of the present. Consciousness no longer moves with the world, the world moves *in* consciousness.

Mr. Barford would seem to refer here to "Cosmic Consciousness," beyond which lies that Absolute Reality entirely outside space and time, subject and object.

The present-day concern with the metaphysical fundamentals of life is an encouraging symptom of the awakening spirit of search, for worlds within to explore, far more ultimately rewarding than travel in outer space.

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The death of Victor Gollancz, the publisher, on 8 February 1967, brings a many-sided humanitarian career to a close. In his search for truth, and his endeavour to live by it as far as he could, he has been the campaigner in, and often the inspirer of, varied movements for the betterment of his fellow men, and he will indeed be missed.

He broke away from orthodox Judaism to become a Christian (more mystical than denominational) who tried to put Christian principles into practice. Among the causes he took up was that of helping enemies (the Germans after the last war, the Arab refugees in Palestine), the campaign to abolish capital punishment, and the movement to foster unilateral nuclear disarmament. His was the original inspiration for the international "War on Want." As a publisher, with an idealist view of socialism, he had founded the Left Book Club in 1936. His love of music, his strong family feeling, his keen business sense were perhaps a legacy from his Jewish blood, as was a certain *panache* that might appear brash and even egotistical, if one did not remember that his race is not Western in origin. But his warmth, sincerity, and courage were rooted in his faith and convictions, and his deservedly popular anthologies of mysticism show where these lie. As Philip Toynbee wrote (*The Observer,* 12 February 1967), "He felt, and he tried very hard to show that there is a metaphysical reality which embraces and enhances the best of our impulses and the best of our hopes."

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